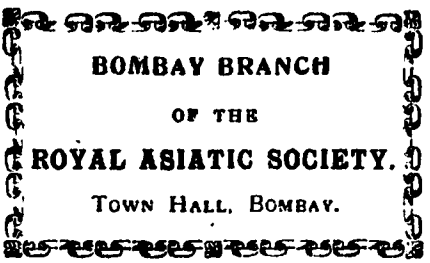
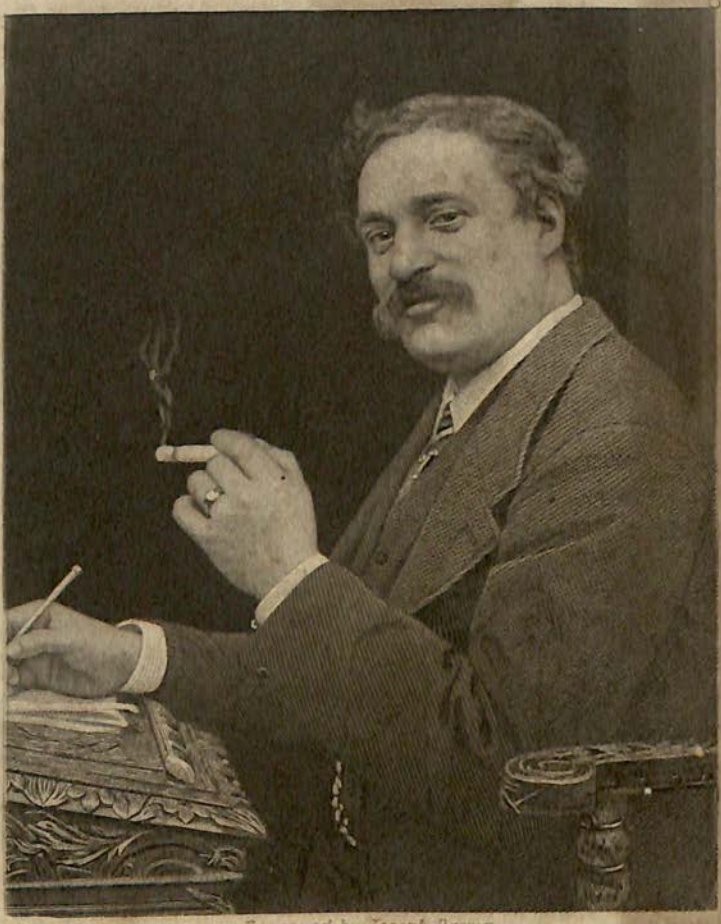
NOT TO BE ISSUED OUT
WITHOUT PERMISSION.



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

XX-C-14b.



Engraved by Joseph Brown.

Edmund Yates.
1865.

From a photograph by Mons. Adolphe Beau.

LONDON, RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON, 1885

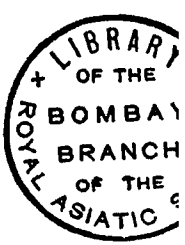
EDMUND YATES:

His Recollections and Experiences.

" Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
And drunk delight of battle with my peers."
TENNYSON'S *Ulysses.*

23406
XX C14,

FOURTH EDITION.



LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON,
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

920.5
Yat/Yat/His
23406

00023406

TO

MY WIFE:

MY CONSTANT COMPANION,

MY WISEST COUNSELLOR,

MY BEST FRIEND:

This Book is Dedicated

PREFACE

TO THE

FOURTH EDITION.

THREE editions of this book having been exhausted in a few months, I take advantage of the publication of the fourth issue to add a chapter descriptive of events of great importance in my career, which have occurred since the original work was written.

I have only now to express my hearty thanks to the public, and to my brother journalists, for the exceptional favour with which these reminiscences have been received, and my hope that the new chapter will be found as free from any objectionable spirit as were its forerunners.

EDMUND YATES.

THAMES LAWN, GREAT MARLOW,
August, 1885.

PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

THIS book is the product of a good memory, a collection of interesting letters from well-known persons, partly inherited, partly formed by myself, and a few diaries, kept in a vague and desultory fashion.

Whether it was or was not worth writing will soon be known: I thought it was, and if any account of my life was ever to be written, I knew that no one could write it so well as myself. Nor, as it seems to me, is there any reason why its publication should be posthumous. I have said in it nothing of which I am ashamed; I do not think I have said any harsh thing of any person, alive or dead; I am certain that I have not said such a thing consciously.

I may add, perhaps, that, so far as I am personally concerned, the period at which this book appears is not inappropriate. My London life—though not, indeed, my London

interests—comes practically to a close with the completion of this record of half a century. I have much to be thankful for, and little or nothing of which to complain; but Nature has warned me that I shall be wise for the future to shun the exhausting ordeal of London, though I hope still to keep all necessary touch of the life of the Great City.

EDMUND YATES.

BRIGHTON, *October*, 1884.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND CHILDHOOD.

1831.

PAGE

Birth—Father's family—Dr. Yates—Uncles—My father: at Charterhouse; in the Commissariat; amateur acting; meeting with the elder Mathews; his imitations; personal appearance; his portraits—My father as an actor—He goes into partnership with Terry—Sir Walter Scott's letter of advice—My mother: her family; her portrait; Charles Dickens's admiration and regard for her—My christening: letter from Theodore Hook; my godfathers; Hook's joke—Our place of residence—The Adelphi Theatre—Adelphi dramas—Adaptations of Dickens's books; John Forster thereon; Charles Dickens on *Nickleby* at the Adelphi; Dickens proposes to dramatise *Oliver Twist*—O. Smith—My father's correspondents, Dr. Maginn, Edmund Kean, Miss Jane Porter, Miss Mitford, Count d'Orsay, Miss Pardoe—A child's recollections: the elder Mathews, Theodore Hook, Lord A. Paget, the Giant, *The Gnome Fly*, James and Horace Smith, Ainsworth, Bunn, Braham, three charming actresses—The Duke of Wellington—O'Connell—Liston—Visitors at the Adelphi house 1-19

CHAPTER II.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION.

1836—1847.

My first teacher—My grandmother—An unprofitable engagement—Struggle for novelty—Sam Warren—Buckstone's dramas—Buckstone's prices—Fees paid nowadays—My preparatory school—Prejudice against actors—The Church and the Stage—Boys' thirst

PAGE

—My grandfather: happy days with him—Low tastes—Newspapers of those days—Spring-heeled Jack—Noble escapades—Notorious murderers—Story-telling—Snuffers, rushlights, and tinder-boxes—Uniforms of police, private soldiers, and postmen—Fashionable costume of the period—Vanished!—Cabs, omnibuses, and stage-coaches—Why shave?—Chimney-sweeps—Changes in London streets—The Farringdon range and mountain-pass—Ichabod—I go to Highgate School—Where I "board"—A great character—My father's last illness; "the ruling passion"—Mr. Macready's letter—My father's death; his funeral; newspaper comments; his character—Resting—"Robsperry"—An old-fashioned pedagogue—My studies—My schoolfellows—Charles Lamb's book—T. E. Gahagan—Other schoolfellows—Prize-day—What will become of me?—To go to Germany—We start; *en voyage*—At Düsseldorf—How I learned German—The artists—Freedom—Progress—English settlers—No Christmas dinner—American settlers—The *Kneipe*—A practical joke—Lord Clanricarde's kindness—I begin life in earnest 20-56

CHAPTER III.

EARLY DAYS IN THE POST OFFICE.

1847—1855.

Small, but certain—Happy days at St. Martin's—My first appearance—The Chief Clerk—No fun now—A practical joker—The bananas—A wonderful cure—"Reported"—Rowland Hill—A cure for excessive animal spirits—My omnibus—A dangerous accomplishment—John Strange Baker; what he taught me—James Kenney—Colonel Maberly: his peculiarities; how he transacted business—Storm-warnings—"Are ye Williams?"—Assisting the surveyor—Deserting my post—Lord Clanricarde's kindness—Introducing the P.M.G.—"The bo'sun"—Lord Hartington—A tyrannical old gentleman—A disagreeable job—The confidential butler—"Old Ben Stanley"—The turning of the worm—I show fight—Sir Rowland's sympathy—Good for the messenger—"In charge:" the journey; the two *courriers;* on board: the voyage—Lord Lyons—Trollope's letter—To Cairo—An Egyptian fair—Egyptian convicts—Lights of the harem—I arrive at Shepherd's—A restless night—Homeward bound—To Hamburg—Ill—Genial Mr. Tilley—Luncheons—Chop-

PAGE

houses—Gratitude "to scale"—City refectories—"Alton alehouses"—Penny steamboats—Popular notions of our work—Small salaries—Sympathetic Colonel Maberly—Nearly lost to England!—The Commission of Inquiry 57-85

CHAPTER IV.

THE AMUSEMENTS OF YOUTH.

1847—1852.

In the Alpha Road—Mr. Edmund Byng: his liking for me; his dinners—"Jim" Macdonald—John Cooper—The cabman's triumph—The Baron—Almack's—Dancing diversions—The Adelaide Gallery—The Polytechnic—Laurent's Casino—The Holborn Casino—Mott's and Weippert's—Vauxhall Gardens: amusements there; too dear—Cremorne—The Coliseum—A small audience—The Cyclorama—The Diorama—"The Overland Route"—Burford's Panoramas—The Chinese junk—Celebrities in the Park: Lady Blessington; D'Orsay; Louis Napoleon; Beauties and beaux—Park riders—Park whips—Social and political celebrities—Eating-houses—Foreign restaurants—Berthollini's—"Slap-bangs"—City taverns—West End restaurants—A revelation—"Simpson's"—Imitations—Fish dinners—Greenwich dinners—Richmond dinners—Supper-houses—Oyster-houses—Night-houses—The Blue Posts—Bob Croft's—Gambling-houses—French hazard—Song-and-Supper taverns—The Coal Hole—The Cider Cellars—The "Back Kitchen"—Ross: his song of "Sam Hall"—Evans's—"Paddy" Green—A change for the better—The annexe—The Garrick's Head—The Judge and Jury—Equestrianism—Rowing—Sparring . 86-117

CHAPTER V.

THE DRAMA IN THOSE DAYS.

1847—1852.

Number of theatres in '47—Her Majesty's: saved by Mdlle. Lind—Mdlle. Lind's *début*; the struggle for the gallery; nearly crushed—A state performance—Mdlle. Lind's success—The ballet—Royal Italian Opera: *Lucrezia Borgia*—Bunn's operas—Jullien—Pro-

PAGE

menade concerts—*Bals masques*—Jullien's season of English opera —*Début* of Mr. Sims Reeves—Drury Lane—Mr. James Anderson's management—Mr. E. T. Smith's *régime*—The *Monte Cristo* row—The Haymarket—Mrs. Nisbett—My introduction to her—Comedies —James Wallack—The Lyceum—Dickens dramatised—Burlesque —The Vestris *régime*—My first appearance in public—Planché's extravaganzas—Charles Mathews—Mr. Maddox: his stock author; his revenge—The Princess's—Mrs. Fanny Kemble Butler—Stars at the Princess's—Charles Kerrison Sala: Macready's hatred of him; Cardinal Campeius—The Adelphi—Wright: his comic powers —Paul Bedford—Half-price—Buckstone's dramas—Madame Celeste —Adelphi farces—The green-room—The Olympic—G. V. Brooke: his success; his death—Leigh Murray—Mrs. Stirling—Lysander Thompson—Mr. Walter Watts: his frauds; his suicide—The St. James's—Lemaître—Bouffé—C. L. Kenney—Rachel—Old William Farren—Mrs. Glover—Mr. George Bennett—Mrs. Mowatt—*The Admiral Crichton*—Mr. Shepherd's delicacy . . 118-143

CHAPTER VI.

THE INFLUENCE OF "PENDENNIS."

1851—1853.

My mother's disappointment—Government service not incompatible with literary career—Desultory reading—What "the dear Bishop" would have said to it—I study Macaulay—And *Household Words*—The *Man in the Moon*—The theatrical critics—Longings for fame, and money—I read *Pendennis*—My fate is sealed—Mere business aptitude not enough—Composition in church—"My dear braithren" —Poem in progress: Mr. Ainsworth accepts it; the proof; the printer—Ha! ha!—Indignation at delay—Albert Smith—Dinner at Horace Twiss's—My talk with Albert Smith—We swear friendship—Mont Blanc entertainment—Albert Smith's appearance; his home; contents of his study—Arthur Smith: his original fun—J. H. Robins: his imitations—The Keeleys—Actors in Brompton—J. L. O'Beirne—My first engagement—The *Court Journal*—Pendennis at last!—The Fielding Club: members; a delightful resort —Opening of "Mont Blanc"—Visit to Paris—The *Dame aux Camélias*—The *Keepsake*—The *Illustrated London News*—My marriage 144-168

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY MARRIED LIFE.

1853—1857.

PAGE

A new berth offered: declined—I become a householder: the "grounds;" the premises; our *ménage*—Sunday excursions—Mrs. Milner Gibson's receptions—Judge Talfourd's hospitality—Fresh ground—My first book: critical opinions—I call on Dickens: his personal appearance; his kind reception of me; first letter from him—My eldest son's birth and christening—*Cruikshank's Magazine*—My ideal picture of Frank Smedley: the reality—Frank Smedley's characteristics—Cruikshank and Smedley—The magic wheel—*Mirth and Metre*—Mr. J. R. Robinson—Doughty Street worthies—Our Doughty Street house: drawbacks; a dull locality—Angus Reach—An amateur pantomime; repeated before her Majesty; disposition of funds raised—The *Illustrated Times*—Mr. H. Vizetelly—Personal journalism—"The Lounger at the Clubs"—Amateur performance at Tavistock House—Birth of twin sons: Thackeray's letter of congratulation—Madame Sala—Dickens to be godfather—Dinner to Thackeray—Shirley Brooks: his cleverness and determination; attack on the Whitefriars stronghold; its success—Brooks's value to *Punch*—"Slumming" with Dickens—An attempt at a novel—The *Inverness Courier*—Am appointed dramatic critic for the *Daily News:* an enjoyable position—Some of the *D.N.* staff—First appearance in *Household Words*—*Our Miscellany*—My first farce—Mr. J. L. Toole—Another farce—Mrs. Bancroft—A comedietta—Miss Ellen Terry—Douglas Jerrold: unpublished *jeux de mots;* last time of seeing him; his death; his funeral—For the Jerrold fund—Among the editors—Bedford's brother—"Sundays out"—Among the artists—Mr. J. M. Levy . . . 169-204

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY EDITORSHIPS.

1855—1858.

British Bohemia: Thackeray's description of it; an outsider; my introduction to it; "It's an ill wind," etc.—Mr. Ingram—My doubts—Mark Lemon—I consult Albert Smith—Edward Draper—Godfrey Turner—F. I. Scudamore—W. P. Hale—E. L. Blanchard—John

PAGE

Oxenford: his genius; why he "let people down easily;" irresponsibility; where his real genius comes out—Mr. G. A. Sala: my first sight of him—The Brothers Brough—"Literary men"—Robert Brough's start in life: at Liverpool; his character: his Radicalism; a remarkable production, *Songs of the Governing Classes*—William Brough—Artists of the staff—The *Comic Times:* short-lived—Our Almanack—Alnaschar—Mark Lemon's device—The basket of eggs falls!—Death of the *C. T.*—Determination—Search for a capitalist—*The Train* is started—An erratic brother: what is to be done?—Robert Brough fills the breach—Contents of No. 1—*The Idler*—James Hannay—"Idlers"—Literary amenities—Mr. Sala in Paris: his work for *The Train;* his journey to St. Petersburg—Newspaper criticism on No. 1—Later contributors—Mr. John Hollingshead—Mr. Moy Thomas—Thackeray on one of our artists—*The Train* stops—Poor Pillicoddy 205-231

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE GARRICK CLUB: AND MY "DIFFICULTY" THEREWITH.

1858.

Clubs in London in '48—The old Garrick—President and Vice-President—J. R. Durrant—"Bardolph"—"Papa"—Arts and Barts—Other members—The Dane—Actors—Guardsmen—Regular frequenters—An important dinner—A proposal—"Short" copy—Judas—Inadequate outburst—My reply—"Rubbing it in"—Not Albert Smith—I consult Dickens—The reply sent—W. M. T. appeals—Special meeting of Committee called—My contention—The Committee has a high opinion of its own function—"Young Grub Street"—I decline to apologise—I must not be present—More correspondence—General meeting—My supporters—Beaten—Law—Legal opinions—Action brought—Too costly—Edwin James, Q.C.—A scapegoat?—Jealousy between C. D. and W. M. T.—Letters between them—Why I have told this story . . 232-259

CHAPTER X.

DESK, STAGE, AND PLATFORM.

1858—1872.

At Seaton: primitive; quiet enjoyment—G. A. Sala on "Polyphemus"—The *Welcome Guest*—More dramatic work—Miss Ellen Terry—The new Adelphi Theatre: delightful Mr. Bedford—An entertain-

PAGE

ment: Mrs. Case—The Volunteer movement: extends to the P. O.; literary officers—Our drill: poor brethren; "Codd Colonel;" the populace sarcastic—The levée—The review—Very wet summer—Amateur performances—Pleasant memories of the C. S. V. R.—Albert Smith: much altered; very brusque; a tiff; we agree to differ—Relations renewed: Albert Smith evidently out of health; a long talk with him; seized with illness, and dies; a great shock; his funeral—My mother's illness; her patience; her death—Deaths of Robert Brough and Herbert Ingram—Still working for the *Daily News* and *Illustrated Times*—Mr. F. C. Burnand's first dramatic attempt—Frank Talfourd's jokes—My abridgment of Mrs. Mathews's big book—An important call—Mr. Thackeray wrongly judged—First hint of *Temple Bar:* I am made sub-editor; contents of No. 1—Mortimer Collins sees me for the first time—Robert Buchanan—J. M. Bellew—Contents of No. 2—Sala in chambers—Our contributors—Alfred Austin—Miss Braddon—An early effort—A Swiss tour: I am knocked over, and very ill; the English doctor—My first lecture—Charles Fechter: his home life; his characteristics—J. M. Bellew: much misunderstood; his own fault; his good qualities; his weakness; best fitted for the pulpit; very popular; his decadence—Fechter as stage-manager; a business letter—A self-sacrificing father—Exhibition of '62—First after-dinner speech—Visit to Stratford—New work—*The Golden Daggers*—Lecturing—I determine on the "show"—Harold Power—The "show" criticised by John Forster—John Parry's kind letter—Close of the "show"—Arrival of Princess Alexandra—I meet Lord Cardigan; attacks on him—Sir George Wombwell on the Balaclava Charge—Lord Cardigan's bravery—Captain Nolan—Death of Thackeray: my obituary notice—Mapesbury House: difficult to find; lost in Willesden—Fate—A novelist wanted: I volunteer—A new character; advantages of local colour—I begin my novel: criticisms on it—My pretty horse-breaker—Dickens's praise—Offers for more—Death of Frank Smedley—Work on the *Morning Star*—*Tinsley's Magazine* . . . 260-295

CHAPTER XI.

A DICKENS CHAPTER.

My intimacy with Dickens—Nineteen years my senior—Dickens's regard for Forster as friend rather than companion—To me always affectionate; always interested—Easily bored, and imperious to

PAGE

outsiders—First invitation: a delightful day—Strained state of affairs—Not an emotional man—Publishes his "statement;" badly advised; no necessity for recalling details—First paid reading; calm and composed; the *Carol* essentially a Christmas book; the *Cricket:* a great success—Provincial tour—Gadshill Place: life there; the châlet—Long walks—The murder in Cobham Park—Dogs—Talk about his books—Correcting a quotation—"In the name of charity"—Heat in Paris—Liking for actors—A holiday with Dickens—Presence of mind—Asleep?—The trained elephant—The Bosjemen—Dickens as editor, as after-dinner speaker; his readiness; saved!—Farewell banquet to Dickens—"The young lions"—With Dickens to Liverpool—A testimonial; thorough—Dickens home from America—We meet at Leeds—Change in his appearance; he tries to rouse; stricken down; better—His hatred of being thought ill—Bad symptoms: *will* not have gout; his self-deception—Last meetings—His public farewell—His last dinner in London—Always considerate—His death: what hastened it; why?—His fame—His fortune—My ideas on the subject—The author and the man 296-322

CHAPTER XII.

PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN.

Sir A. Cockburn: a model host; the Palmer trial; getting up the case; compliment paid him; impudent but amusing; Sir A. Cockburn at Dickens's readings; a dinner in Hertford Street; story of Sir R. Bethell; a good horse story; a prosy advocate; Mr. Rufus Rightly; musical visitors and *habitués;* smartness in repartee; devotion to work; death—Introduction to Lord Beaconsfield; changes in Brighton; Mr. Delane's successor; Dickens and Lord Beaconsfield; authors less interesting than their books; Lord Beaconsfield's opinion—The birth of *Punch;* original staff—Mark Lemon: as funny man; an excellent editor—Shirley Brooks: early days; first literary plunge; summary-writer; special Commissioner; his value to *Punch;* "What's a pound?"; Brooks's humour; his appearance and manner of life; last days—Tom Taylor—F. C. Burnand—John Leech: his friends; his kindness to me; stories of Leech; his death—Horace Mayhew—Two stories of Thackeray—J. R. Planché

PAGE

—The two Dukes of Wellington—Abraham Hayward: I introduce myself to him—Sam Rogers—Bishop Wilberforce—Hayward on the Garrick case—Lord Melbourne—Sir Robert Peel—The "inside track"—John Forster: characteristic story; his interest in *The World;* his *Life* of Swift—Charles Reade: a friend in need; how he worked—Martin Tupper at Albury: his wonderful book—Lord Tennyson—Carlyle and the "puir creatur"—George Eliot—J. T. Delane: his sensitiveness; will not be a "celebrity"—Robert Keeley: two stories of him—J. B. Buckstone—Miss Braddon: her letters—Jules Janin: story of the two Dumas; Janin's house; account of his death; dislike to being pitied; French customs; his workroom; anecdote; Janin's funeral; celebrities present—E. A. Sothern: practical joking; last days—C. J. Mathews: at home; a letter from him—Mortimer Collins: a poem by him, . 323-363

CHAPTER XIII.

LATER DAYS IN THE POST OFFICE.

Quietly happy days—Promotion—The Missing Letter Branch—My staff—A disbeliever: teaching a lesson—"Test letters:" grandfather's money—Mr. W. Peacock's method—The Old Bailey: leaders; juniors—City detectives—A "sell"—Interesting experiences—How it was done—Purchase of the telegraphs—F. I. Scudamore—Mr. Tilley—New use for my services—Necessary qualifications; sounds well; I accept—My new career and its duties—I "orate"—The little man; I am denounced; an ugly customer; why the etcetera? my defence; victory; "Yates!"—I occasion surprise—Lord Lonsdale: at Lowther; his comments; anecdote—my official journeys: Devon and Cornwall, Boscastle, Helston—Literary work: two novels—The Lake country—Dublin, Killarney, Galway—End approaches: consultations; Scudamore's advice—Uncomfortable doubts: a serious outlook—I am pensioned—Farewell dinner to me—Two well-known P. O. officials—Their mutual dislike—Sir Rowland Hill: my move; Trollope winged; Sir R. Hill's sarcasms; his dry humour; his later days; his characteristic caution—Anthony Trollope; his roughness and roarings; his goodness of heart; love for his office; why he retired; no humour—A good story 364-395

CHAPTER XIV.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

1872—1873.

PAGE

A little rest—Not wholly idle—Doubts—A suggestion—"The Chevalier:" his appearance—First idea of America: suggestion approved; accepted—At work for America—Winding up—Farewell festivities—Night before sailing—Off—*Cuba* passengers—"A scrape"—Mistaken identity—Arrival—A doubtful welcome—Interviews—Business talk—Hearty reception—Decline Chicago *début*—First appearance in New York: success; criticisms—Good offer for a story—To Chicago—Dine with Liberal Club—Women's mass-meeting—Mr. Marsh—Miss Blake—Rev. Olympia Brown—Pogram!—The veteran Susan B.—Am hospitably entertained—Further lectures in New York—Newhaven—Boston—Longfellow—Boston fire—An enthusiastic "boss"—Philadelphia friends—Funeral of General Meade—In Washington—Long journeys—Work in the train—Manner of life—On grand tour—Desperate weather—Snowed up—Christmas Day—Miss Cushman—Niagara—Montreal—End of tour—Kindness everywhere—"The future"—Dislike of public appearances—I engage with Mr. Bennett—To New York—A new task—To the inaugural ceremonies—I describe them—Give satisfaction—Farewell entertainments in New York—Home—What America did for me—My gratitude 396-425

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE "HERALD'S" TABARD.

1873—1875.

Homeward voyage—Arrive—Off to Paris—Return—Looking up arrears—Dr. Hosmer—My intended colleagues at Vienna—Great things to be done—Our rivals—Mr. Archibald Forbes in Vienna: we are to "chum"—Off at last—Our Viennese lodgings—A pleasant *camaraderie*—South Kensington representation—Our mess at the Taube—Concordia dinner—Presented to the Prince of Wales—Opening of the Exhibition—Our cable messages: victory—A dinner in honour of our success—Full war-paint—To Buda-Pesth—Another

PAGE

Prince learning his business—Home—Off again—I note the downfall of Thiers—In attendance on the Shah—Mark Twain and the British man-o'-war's man—Still after the Shah—With him to Paris, Versailles, the old opera-house, Auteuil, and the Trocadéro—Back to Vienna—Glorious time—Tour through Germany: Gmünden, Ischl, Munich, Nuremberg—To Dublin—Old friends—To Galway—The *Virginius* difficulty—I go to Madrid: horrible journey; a kindly magnifico; quarantine and robbery—At Madrid—General Sickles—Sir A. H. Layard—Count Maffei—A bull-fight—A dangerous voyage: my intercession implored; the value of quick hearing—A long journey in prospect—Americans and Russians—I am to go to St. Petersburg—Forbes in India—I meet two distinguished *medicos*—In Berlin—Dr. Strousberg—*En route*—At St. Petersburg—Journalists there—Mr. Napier Broome's work—The American minister — Eugene Schuyler — Entertainments and rejoicings—The *Scotsman*—Preparations—Telegraph arrangements—The wedding ceremony—The Anglican service; a wonderful crowd; a veteran embarrassed—I send my message; all right!—I am complimented—Other *Herald* work—John Mitchel—Have no more time at Mr. Bennett's disposal—I retire . . 426-444

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE WORLD."

Enforced travel—Somewhat too much of it—Again in doubt—My particular work—An ideal "blend"—Grenville Murray: his history—"Sir Hector Stubble"—Murray at Odessa—I visit him in the Albany—The *Queen's Messenger*—In court—Murray departs—His work in Paris—He approves of my idea, and suggests partnership—Making arrangements for starting a new journal: its title; finance—Editor—my word of warning—Arbitration if necessary—The prospectus — An announcement — Contributors: Mr. Escott; Mr. Labouchere; other contributors—Issue of No. 1—Attempt at introducing the *réclame*—Notable articles—Unappreciated—Just in time—A lucky prosecution—Mr. George Lewis's triumph—My foresight—Dissolution of partnership—The series "Celebrities at Home"—Boswell's work—"Royalties" at home—Cause of our success—The prophets at fault—Become a necessity . . . 445-466

CHAPTER THE LAST.

IN HOLLOWAY JAIL.

PAGE

The strangest of all my experiences—An absent "brother"—Master Mellor's query—A glimpse of the future—In the Appeal Court—The tipstaff—First night in prison—Life in prison—My evenings—Released 467-485

EDMUND YATES:

HIS RECOLLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND CHILDHOOD.

1831.

I WAS born on the 3rd July, 1831, in a street called, I believe, Howard Place, off the Calton Hill, Edinburgh. The fact that my birth took place in Scotland, or indeed anywhere out of London, where my parents habitually resided, was accidental. It was indeed due to the circumstance that my mother was accompanying my father, who was engaged on a professional tour, and that I arrived in this world some little time before I was expected.

My father and my mother belonged to the theatrical profession. The former, Frederick Henry Yates, was born on the 4th February, 1797, the youngest son of Thomas Yates, a wholesale tobacco manufacturer, who lived in Russell Square, and had a warehouse in Thames Street. Of my father's three brothers, the eldest, Thomas, studied medicine successfully, was accounted very learned and prosperous, and lived for many years at 57, Regency Square, Brighton, esteemed as one of the wisest and most trustworthy of the numerous physicians who in the first half of the century aided in establishing the reputation of that growing watering-place. There are

Brightonians yet alive who talk to me of my uncle Dr. Yates, remembering him with his white hair, snowy shirt-frill, Hessian boots or black gaiters, long black coat and gold-headed cane; a man of importance in the town, senior physician to the Sussex County Hospital, and principal medical attendant on Harriet Duchess of St. Albans, who visited Brighton frequently in those days, driving along the King's Road in state, or walking on the Steine with her coffee-coloured pugs. He was the sternest-looking and the kindest-hearted of men, to me was always prodigal of good advice and half-sovereigns, and must have had a large practice, for he lived in good style; and one of my childish recollections is hearing my aunt say that "she never bought black silk for aprons, for the doctor went to so many funerals, and always brought away his silk scarf and hat-band." The other brothers, Walter and Charles, neither of whom I ever saw, were in the military service of the Honourable East India Company. The former lived to be a brigadier-general; the latter, known in the army as "Kemmindine" Yates, from his gallant defence of a pass of that name in Burmah, died a major, comparatively young.*

My father, the youngest of the family—he had two sisters, to one of whom I shall have afterwards to refer—received his rudimentary education at a preparatory school at Winchmore Hill, where he met John Reeve, subsequently his actor-colleague, then a tiny boy. His second school was the Charterhouse, where he had Dr. Raine, and later on Dr. Russell, known as "Paw" Russell from his enormous hands, for his head-masters, and Henry Havelock, the future saviour of India, for his contemporary and friend. He always spoke pleasantly of his school-days. My friend, the late Mr. W. P. Hale, son of Archdeacon Hale, Master of the Charterhouse, told me that when a schoolboy he once addressed a letter to my father at the Adelphi Theatre, asking him, on the plea of his having formerly been a Carthusian, for some free admissions to the play. These came by the next post, enclosed in a half-

* *Vide* Major Snodgrass's "Narrative of the Burmese War."

sheet of paper, on which was written, "Floreat æternum Carthusiana domus.—F. H. Y."

On leaving school my father obtained an appointment in the Commissariat Department, and was sent out to the army then fighting under the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula. I have always understood that he was present at the battle of Waterloo, though of this I have no direct proof; but he was certainly on duty with the army of occupation at Valenciennes, in November of the Waterloo year, for the late Dr. Quin and the late Lord William Pitt Lennox have frequently spoken to me of his being there with them, a most delightful comrade. It was there that he first gave evidence of the possession of any histrionic ability, and his adoption of the stage as a profession had its origin doubtless in the success which attended his amateur performances with his military friends.

His determination to make some practical use of his talents was arrived at in a somewhat curious way. Invited to a fancy-dress ball, he went as "Somno, the sleep-walker," a character then being played by Charles Mathews the elder, in which the great mimic introduced his celebrated imitations. To my father's surprise, Mathews appeared among the guests; but, nothing daunted, the young man sustained his impersonation, and, on being requested, gave his own imitations of the actors usually imitated by Mathews, winding up with one of Mathews himself. The great actor was so struck by the ability—and possibly by the impudence—of the amateur, that he requested to be introduced, and begged my father to call on him the next day. At this interview he inquired about his young friend's profession and prospects, and most strongly urged him to take to the stage.

"Commissary!" testily repeated the comedian, after my father had named his avocation, "commissary! dromedary! Carrying about other people's provisions and getting none yourself! Feeding fat soldiers and dying of starvation! No, no; give it up, young man, and let your real talents find their proper channel." My father took the advice thus warmly

urged upon him, and made his first appearance as a professional actor in the year 1817.

The conference was described by my father in one of his entertainments, and afforded scope for the introduction of a very effective and not illegitimate "gag." He told how Mathews complimented him on his performance, and especially on his imitations. "They were excellent, excellent—except one! You can't imitate me!" As my father repeated the words he raised his shoulder, twisted his mouth, and limped up and down the stage, the very double of Mathews. It was a wonderful piece of mimicry, and always brought down the house.

In the following year (1818) he made his *début* in London at Covent Garden, appearing as Iago to the Othello of Charles Young, the Cassio of Charles Kemble, and the Desdemona of Miss O'Neil. He told my mother with great glee in after years that one of the newspapers, criticising his first appearance, described him as "a small man of Jewish aspect, by no means pleasing." Besides a full-length water-colour sketch by Deighton in my possession, there are three portraits of my father which I know, one by Lonsdale, in the Garrick Club gallery; another, by Ambrose, belongs to me; while the third is the property of my friend Mr. J. C. Parkinson, and was acquired by him in rather an odd way. It had originally belonged to "Paddy" Green, forming one of the theatrical collection on the walls of Evans's, and was included in the sale of that collection at Christie's. Mr. Parkinson had noted the picture in the catalogue, and, being one of my most intimate friends, desired to buy it. He accordingly attended the sale, bought three other lots, but before the "Frederick Yates" was put up he was called away by a telegram. When he returned, the portrait had been sold. A year or two afterwards another theatrical collection, that of Lacy, the dramatic publisher in the Strand, came to the hammer at Christie's. Again Mr. Parkinson was present; again he saw in the catalogue "Portrait of Fred. Yates," which eventually he bid

for and bought. When he got it home, he found, from a label on the back, that it was the same portrait which he had previously missed, and which Lacy had secured during his temporary absence.

I may say here that from persons who knew him well and who had seen him often, Charles Dickens and many celebrated actors among them, I have heard the highest praise of my father's histrionic powers. Notably of his versatility : he played no part badly, and he could play more parts and more diverse parts than most of his comrades. He was the "stock" Iago of Covent Garden while engaged there, and was reckoned to play it specially well; he was a wonderful Jew, a perfect Frenchman, an impassioned lover, and excelled equally as a cool dandy or a reckless dare-devil. As a proof of this versatility, I note that his second appearance at Covent Garden was as Falstaff, on which occasion Macready played Hotspur for the first time. Dickens, writing to me after seeing Henry Irving, in his early days, as Rawdon Scudamore, in *Hunted Down*, says : "He reminded me very much of your father." Dickens also thought Fechter very like my father in many respects. Of Dickens's general opinion of the acting of my father and my mother we shall see more further on.

In 1825 he went into management on his own account, taking the Adelphi Theatre, with which his name was afterwards so largely identified, in conjunction with Daniel Terry, a clever actor, but who is now best known, if known at all, by his having been honoured with the friendship of Sir Walter Scott. Although great success was achieved by the dramatisation of popular novels, such as *The Flying Dutchman* and Fenimore Cooper's *Pilot*, neither of the partners was a good business man, and the speculation ended in a large loss, Terry's share of which was paid by Scott, who was his surety. I find among my father's papers the following admirable letter from Sir Walter. It has never before been published, and it proves, as Lockhart points out in the famous *Life*, how very much easier it was for Scott to give excellent advice than to practise what he preached.

"3, Walter Street, 17 January [no year].

My dear Terry,—I duly received your letter, but am a little alarmed at the subject. My good fellow, you will have hard swimming, though wind and tide be with you, considering the large sums which you have to pay up, and that any check which may occupy a great share of your funds may make that hopeful undertaking precarious.

I doubt greatly whether the Paris undertaking can succeed. The french (*sic*) have shown a disinclination to English actors; and for the British, they are, generally speaking, persons who care little about their own country or language while they sojourn in a foreign country. There are about twenty-five or thirty theatres in Paris already, and I fear it would be a very rash speculation to erect or open another. I have no doubt you have taken better advice than mine; *but having undertaken one good adventure, chiefly on credit, I think you should pause before being too sanguine in undertaking another.*

After all, if you do determine on this, I will send you an introduction to the secretary of our Ambassador; but I would have you reflect seriously that there is no royal road to riches any more than to wisdom, and that 'Catch is a good dog, but Holdfast a better.' Your fine family ought to make you cautious. If you can clear the Adelphi, you will establish their future; but a failure which might be brought about by an outlay of capital elsewhere would be an irremediable misfortune, anything short of absolute certainty of success (*sic*).

I am sure you will not suppose that I would knowingly dissuade you from any beneficial plan for securing or hastening your advancement in life. But I must say, with General Tom Thumb, 'King Arthur, beware!' *Many a thing good in itself becomes ruinous to individuals who have not provided the funds necessary:* and a London and Paris theatre sounds very like playing for a gammon, which may be the noblest, but is seldom the wisest game. Kind love to Mrs. Terry. I write in haste, so make allowances for errors of expression.—Yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT."

Readers of Lockhart will see how exactly Terry and Scott were running on parallel lines. After Terry's retirement in 1828, my father was joined in management by his friend and tutor Charles

Mathews; and the palmy days of the Adelphi commenced then and there.

Four years previously Frederick Yates had married Miss Elizabeth Brunton, a young actress holding a good position at Covent Garden, and coming from a well-known theatrical family. Her grandfather, John Brunton, and, after him, her father, also John Brunton, had for very many years had the management of what was known in theatrical parlance as "the Norfolk circuit,"—a number of towns in the eastern counties, with Norwich for their principal centre; her aunt, Miss Louisa Brunton, a handsome and clever actress, was married in 1807 to the seventh Earl of Craven; and her uncle, Richard Brunton, was in the army, was present at Waterloo, and died colonel of the 13th Hussars, then Light Dragoons.

A miniature of my mother in her youth, painted by Stump of Cork Street, in my possession, shows her as a lovely girl; but in my recollection of the last half—thirty years—of her life, her charm lay rather in the softness and sweetness of her expression than in regularity of feature. Her eyes were blue and rather hard, her complexion was dark; but her mouth, furnished with beautiful teeth, was singularly winning, her laugh infectious, and her voice one of the sweetest ever heard. In 1858, years after she had retired from the stage, Charles Dickens wrote to her in reference to her coming to one of his Readings: "Whenever you can come, your presence will give me a new interest in that evening. No one alive can have more delightful associations with the lightest sound of your voice than I have; and to give you a minute's interest and pleasure, in acknowledgment of the unaccountable hours of happiness you gave me when you were a mysterious angel to me, would honestly gratify my heart." And again, after her death in 1860, Dickens wrote to me: "You know what a loving and faithful remembrance I always had of your mother as a part of my youth, no more capable of restoration than my youth itself. All the womanly goodness, grace, and beauty of my drama went out with her. To the last, I never could hear her voice without emotion. I

think of her as of a beautiful part of my own youth, and the dream that we are all dreaming seems to darken." She was an excellent "all-round" actress, and raised the heroines of melodrama, or "domestic" drama, into a specialty, playing the characters with genuine pathos wholly unaccompanied by exaggeration. In her private life she was one of the best of women, truly and unaffectedly pious, cheerful, and charitable; a loving, forgiving, and long-suffering wife, a most self-sacrificing and devoted mother.

I do not know the date of my christening, but the record is in the registry of Brompton Church, and the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Thomas Speidell, rector of Crick in Northamptonshire, a friend of Charles Mathews and Theodore Hook. The latter, who was intimate with my father—I can perfectly recollect seeing him at our house—was present at some little festivity on the occasion, as I have in my possession the following note to my mother:

"Fulham, Monday.

My dear Mrs. Yates,—Your invitation for the 20th is so very agreable (*sic*) to me that, unlike *your* Victorine,* I'll *not* 'sleep upon it,' but say, Yes, with all my heart, at once. I have a great fancy for making Christians, and have already twice this year assisted at similar ceremonies. That our excellent friend Speidell is to be officiating minister on the occasion makes the affair more agreable (*sic*). — Believe me, with sincere regard to Monsieur Frédérique *père*, yours most sincerely,

THEODORE HOOK."

My godfathers were the Honourable Edmund Byng, second son of the fifth Viscount Torrington—of whom I shall have much to say hereafter—and Frederick Hodgson, M.P. for Barnstaple, known as "Brown Stout," from his size and dark complexion, and the fact that he was the owner of a famous brewery at Bow, whence issued that "Hodgson's India Pale Ale" which, long before the days of Bass and Allsopp, had an enormous sale in the East, and realized a splendid fortune for

* *Victorine, or I'll sleep on It*, a drama by Buckstone, with my mother as the heroine, was played at the Adelphi with very great success.

its proprietor.* The names given to me at my baptism were accordingly Edmund Hodgson, which evoked a joke from Theodore Hook. "Fred, what are you going to call the boy?" he asked my father. "Edmund Hodgson, after his godfathers, Byng and Hodgson." "What, big Hodson, Brown Stout, the brewer?" "Yes." "Humph!" said Hook, "then you'd much better call him Bingo Stingo!"

At that time, and during all my early childhood, we lived at No. 411, Strand, forming part of the Adelphi Theatre premises, a house which, during its previous tenancy by Terry, had been visited by Sir Walter Scott, and which is described in one of his letters as "a curious dwelling, not larger than a squirrel's cage, which he (Terry) has contrived to squeeze out of the vacant space of the theatre, and which is accessible by a most complicated combination of staircases and passages." A small side-door, immediately inside the street-door, and at the foot of a long and steep flight of stairs, gave access to the public lobby of the theatre; and through that door I used to take furtive peeps at all I was permitted, until after I was seven years old, to see of the fairy world beyond. I remember well the bright paper on the walls and the brilliant gaseliers, which I had occasionally had the rare happiness to see alight; but I knew of nothing further. I thought this lobby was "the theatre" of which I heard such constant mention, and thoroughly believed that "the boxes," so frequently referred to, were actual chests, on which, or in which, people sat while the mysterious "performance" took place. My parents had no great liking for their calling, and I was not merely never allowed to visit the theatre, but was kept in as much ignorance, in regard to it and its surroundings, as was possible with my position.

This distaste for his profession on my father's part assuredly arose from no want of success, for under him and his coadjutors the "little Adelphi" had become one of the most popular places of amusement in London. It had its specialty as the

* "For you never were in India,
That you know not HODGSON'S ALE."
Vide "Jupiter and the Indian Ale," in the *Ballads of Bon Gaultier*.

home of melodrama, a class of entertainment which, having almost fallen into desuetude, seems now to have been successfully revived;* and it was a great "half-price" house—"half-price," now entirely obsolete, being the reduced admission-money taken after nine o'clock. It was very cramped and stuffy and inconvenient, but it had always enjoyed a very large share of public favour. In its early days the town had gone mad over *Tom and Jerry, or Life in London*, when produced there; in it Mathews had given his most celebrated "At Home" entertainments, Buckstone's dramas, *Victorine*, *The Wreck Ashore*, *Isabel*, *etc.*, with my mother as heroine, my father in some eccentric part, John Reeve† and the author himself as the fun-makers, and Mrs. Fitzwilliam, O. Smith, Wilkinson, Lyon, Hemming, Cullenford, and many long-forgotten names.

Plays adapted from popular novels were favourite subjects for presentation at the Adelphi. Bulwer's *Last Days of Pompeii*, with my father as Arbaces, and Mrs. Keeley—still happily alive, and in wonderful bodily and mental vigour at seventy-nine—as the blind girl Nydia. I have heard my mother speak of this impersonation of Mrs. Keeley's as singularly graceful and pathetic, and of her singing of a ballad, "The Wind and the Beam loved the Rose," as simply perfect. In later years the same actress achieved great notoriety as the hero of a drama

* "Or in the Adelphi sitting, half in rapture, half in tears,
Saw the glorious melodrama conjure up the shades of years."
Bon Gaultier's Ballads.

† John Reeve was the principal "low comedian" of the theatre, a man of much humour, and an enormous favourite. So popular was he that his frequent appearance on the stage, when considerably overcome with drink, was generally good-naturedly condoned by the audience. On one occasion however, and when he happened to be playing a supposed scene of intoxication, he was really so far gone that he could not keep his balance, and fell down. This was too much, and the spectators lustily hissed. John Reeve raised himself with difficulty, advanced to the footlights, and in thick tones of virtuous indignation, asked, "What's the meaning of this? Don't all of you know that I'm a drunken individual?" The unconscious *double entendre* delighted his hearers, and peace was restored.

made out of a very different kind of Novel—Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*; in which Mr. Paul Bedford first made any special mark by his performance of Blueskin.

The genius of Charles Dickens seems from the first to have been the prey of the dramatic "adapter," who cut and hacked, excised and even added, to suit the requirements of his clients. *Pickwick* was, I believe, put upon the stage, with John Reeve as Sam Weller; but it could not have made any mark, and was probably only dramatised for the sake of presenting living semblance of characters which were then in every shop-window and on every drawing-room table; but *Nickleby* and *Oliver Twist* were, at the Adelphi, exceptional successes. That they were so seems to have given great offence to that worthy but very prejudiced gentleman, Mr. John Forster. Dickens himself, as I will shortly show, was greatly pleased with the *Nickleby* play; but Forster, *Dickenso ipso Dickensior*, treats the subject with extorted patronage or hearty grumbling. "He (Dickens) has been able to sit through *Nickleby*, and *see a kind of merit* in some of the actors. Mr. Yates had a sufficiently humorous meaning in his wildest extravagance, and Mr. O. Smith could put into his queer angular oddities enough of a hard dry pathos to *conjure up shadows* at least of Mantalini and Newman Noggs; and even Dickens, *in the letter that amazed me by telling of his visit to the theatre*, was able to praise the skilful management and dressing of the boys, the capital manner and speech of Fanny Squeers, the dramatic representation of her card-party in Squeers's parlour, the careful making-up of all the people, and the exceedingly good tableaux formed from Browne's sketches. . . . Mrs. Keeley's first appearance beside the fire, and all the rest of Smike, was excellent." This, *pace* Mr. Forster, is surely high praise from an author in Dickens's position; but that he not merely was sulkily content, as Mr. Forster would have us believe, but was really heartily gratified by the manner in which the play was produced and acted, the following letter, written by him to my father, and now in my possession, will prove:

"48, Doughty Street, Thursday Morning.

My dear Sir,—I am very glad indeed that *Nickleby* is doing so well. You are right about the popularity of the work, for its sale has left even that of *Pickwick* far behind.

My general objection to the adaptation of any unfinished work of mine simply is that, being badly done and worse acted, it tends to vulgarise the characters, to destroy or weaken in the minds of those who see them the impressions I have endeavoured to create, and consequently to lessen the after-interest in their progress. *No such objection can exist for a moment where the thing is so admirably done in every respect as you have done it in this instance.* I felt it an act of common justice, after seeing the piece, to withdraw all objection to its publication, and to say thus much to the parties interested in it without reserve. If you can spare us a private box for next Tuesday, I shall be much obliged to you. If it be on the stage, so much the better, as I shall be really glad of an opportunity to tell Mrs. Keeley and O. Smith how much I appreciate their Smike and Newman Noggs. I put you out of the question altogether, *for that glorious Mantalini is beyond all praise.*—Faithfully yours, CHARLES DICKENS."

If Mr. Forster was "amazed" by a letter from Dickens mentioning his visit to the Adelphi, how much more would he have been "amazed" had he seen the above letter of praise, in which a second visit is suggested? and to what pitch would his amazement have reached if he had known that I have a further letter from Dickens to my father, offering himself to dramatise *Oliver Twist* for the Adelphi? The letter runs thus.

"Supposing we arrange preliminaries to our mutual satisfaction, I propose to dramatise *Oliver Twist* for the first night of next season.

I have never seen Mrs. Honnor, to the best of my recollection; but, from the mere circumstance of her being a Mrs., I should say at once that she was 'a many sizes too large' for Oliver Twist. If it be played by a female, it should be a very sharp girl of thirteen or fourteen, not more, or the character would be an absurdity. I don't see the possibility of any other house doing it before your next opening night. If they do, it must be done in a very extraordinary manner, as the story, unlike that of *Pickwick*, is an in-

volved and complicated one. I am quite satisfied that no one can have heard what I mean to do with the different characters in the end, inasmuch as, at present, I don't quite know myself; so we are tolerably safe on that head. I am quite sure that your name as the Jew, and mine as the author, would knock any other attempts quite out of the field."

Surely the inference from this is, that Dickens was by no means displeased by his dramatic treatment at the Adelphi. Dickens had so very frequently spoken to me in enthusiastic terms of my father's acting as Mantalini, as Fagin, and as Quilp, and had so often praised the manner in which, under difficult circumstances, the various plays had been produced at the Adelphi, that I was highly amused on the publication of Mr. Forster's statement, and determined at my own time to take an opportunity of refuting it.

O. Smith, the actor referred to in this correspondence, was a singular man. His name was Richard Smith, but winning renown in the commencement of his career by his performance of Obi, in a drama called *Three-fingered Jack*, he was dubbed O. Smith, to distinguish him from the multifarious possessors of his patronymic, and remained thus known throughout his life.* Condemned by an odd Fate to the perpetual portrayal of murderers, robbers, pirates, etc., in private life "he was the mildest-mannered man," well read and informed, a clever water-colour artist, with an air of old-fashioned courtesy not detracted from by a slight deafness. He played demons and gnome-kings as well as villains, and once based an application to my father for increase of salary on the fact that, owing to his being so constantly in dangerous positions, in the midst of fire, going up and down traps, etc., the life-insurance companies would only accept him at a "hazardous" premium. His demoniac laugh, a deep bass "Ho, ho!" was very effective—

* It was Sheridan Knowles who, in his half-blundering, half-witty, wholly Irish way, told O. Smith he was "always mistaking him for his namesake, T. P. Cooke."

"He laughed, as Mr. O. Smith laughs,
An inward double-knock."
Gilbert a'Beckett's Almanack of the Month.

The visitors to the Adelphi in those days would seem to have been not only numerous, but distinguished. Amongst my father's correspondence I find many letters from Miss Mitford, Miss Jane Porter, Lady Morgan, Mrs. Norton, Miss Pardoe, L. E. L., Lady Blessington, George Colman, Rev. G. Croly, Haynes Bayly, Sheridan Knowles, Maginn, Sam Warren, Theodore Hook, Thomas Hood, Barham, Talfourd, Moore, Luttrell, James and Horace Smith, Edmund Kean, Charles Kemble, Macready, H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex (with a present of a gold snuff-box), Count d'Orsay, Lords Chesterfield, Clanricarde, Adolphus Fitzclarence, Fitzhardinge, Castlereagh, etc., all expressing their thanks for gratification received or expected at his hands.

Here is Dr. Maginn's note, sent with a pear:

"A Pear fresh gathered from Nelson's pear-tree presents its compliments to Mrs. Yates.

Though not inviting to the eye,
Take me as plucked from off the tree
Planted by him whose battle-cry
Was herald still of *Victory*.
Fit offering therefore, as I ween,
For her who is the *Victorine*."

Kean's letter is very characteristic:

"January 4, 1831.

Dear Yates,—Can I have my usual box to-night? I stay in London but a couple of days, and it will be an indulgence. I detest mixing with the *canaille*. *I like the public's money, but despise them.* —Yours truly, EDMUND KEAN."

Miss Jane Porter, possibly not much read by the present generation, but greatly admired by Scott and loved by our fathers and mothers for her *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *Scottish Chiefs*, wants "an engagement for a person in whom I am greatly interested. She was a leading comic actress in a small

but respectable company, which used to come annually to Thames Ditton (!), and perform there during five or six years of our residence in the neighbourhood. My venerable mother, and other most excellent heads of the families about, always patronised the company because of the Worthiness of character as individuals." Miss Porter's description of her *protégée's* personal appearance is delightful: "She is now a middle-aged woman, of a slight airy form, a quick and pleasing countenance, though not handsome, a pleasant and clear voice and genteel enunciation. She would be capable to undertake all old or elderly female characters in comedy, or, indeed, from the still juvenile appearance of her figure and lively countenance, chambermaids and the like would not come amiss to her. She could also lead choruses of peasantry, etc."

Miss Mitford asks: "What would be the remuneration for a drama such as you wish? . . . . Supposing we agree as to terms, would the enclosed Incendiary story answer for the serious part of a piece? I think it would; that is to say, I think it might admit of some good scenes for Mrs. Yates, whom I have never had the pleasure of seeing perform, but who is said by everyone to be a most sweet, affecting, and natural actress. . . . . I saw a part of the *Wreck Ashore* at Reading, but could not sit it out. I was so terribly nervous that the motion of the latch and Grampus's face through the window seemed to me like actual housebreaking, of which I have great dread. I have an equal aversion to guns and explosions of all kinds, which may account for my never having been to any small theatre except the Haymarket."

Every one seems to have had what the Americans call "an axe to grind." Count d'Orsay writes: "J'ai un mélodrame en deux actes à vous offrir, écrit par un des mes amis: l'histoire est tirée d'un ouvrage de George Sand, un des meilleurs auteurs Français de notre époque: c'est intitulé *L'Uscocco.* Les caractères sont bien adaptés à la réunion des bons acteurs que vous possedez à l'Adelphi; et si vous pensez que cela puisse vous convenir je vous enverrai le manuscrit."

Miss Pardoe writes, offering to translate a play which has just been produced in Paris by Mdlle. Mars, and which is exactly suited to my mother's style: "I am certain that in the *rôle* of Mdlle. Mars you will turn all the heads in London, as she turned all those in Paris." The piece was called *Louise de Lignerolles*, and was, I fancy, played at the Adelphi. Another play by Miss Pardoe, which I recollect seeing, was called *Agnes St. Aubyn, the Wife of Two Husbands.* I think my friend Mr. Dion Boucicault must have seen this piece before writing *Hunted Down.*

My memories of that queer little private house over the theatre, and the visitors to its drawing-room, from the window of which I saw the Guards—I think in white fatigue-jackets—marching through the Strand on their way to embarkation for Canada in 1837, and was shown the reflection of the flames of the burning Royal Exchange in the following year, are very clear. I remember the elder Mathews, a wizen dark man, with one high shoulder, a distorted mouth, a lame leg, and an irritable manner. He took little notice of me, save on one occasion, when a pet little black dog, which always accompanied him, sprang up and bit me on the cheek, and then nothing could exceed his remorseful interest. I remember Theodore Hook, bald and bluff, given, it was understood, to bumptiousness and swagger in some houses, but always pleasant in ours. He never needed pressing, but would sing his impromptu songs and cut his jokes with boyish glee. One of these, and a hitherto unpublished one, I think, my mother used to tell. A few friends were seated round our dinner-table when a certain Mr. Rósenhĕgen called to see my father. He looked into the room, but, seeing the company, withdrew at once. "There, Hook," said a great friend of his, W. S. Streatfield, "you couldn't make a rhyme to that man's name!" "Couldn't I?" said Hook; and with scarce a moment's delay, he called out:

"Mr. Rósenhĕgen!
Pop your nose in again!"

Hook, however, must have been a desperate snob, and the sketch of him as Wagg, in *Pendennis*, would not seem to be over-coloured. One day at a dinner-party at the Adelphi, my mother overheard him say to his neighbour, "I wonder whether they've iced the claret?" She at once addressed him laughingly, "Don't be afraid, Mr. Hook; Mr. Hodgson's butler has charge of the wine!" Mr. Hodgson was one of Hook's "patrons," and a friend in many ways, so Hook collapsed.

I remember my good friend Lord Alfred Paget, then a very young man, standing, measuring heights, back to back with M. Bihin, tallest, best-natured, and stupidest of Belgian giants, then playing an engagement at the theatre. I remember wandering into the room and shrieking with terror at seeing a singular creature creeping over the chairs and tables with wondrous agility. This was a Mr. Harvey Leach, professionally known as Signor Hervio Nano, a dwarf, or rather a truncated being, with handsome head, fine torso, immense muscular strength in the arms, and no legs to speak of. He played in a piece called *The Gnome Fly*, in which, made up as a fly, he crawled over the proscenium, and, I think, journeyed on wires from the gallery to the stage. I remember James Smith, with an ivory-handled crutch-stick, and his brother Horace, coming to read the dramatic version of his novel, *Jane Lomax*, which he had prepared for my mother. Ainsworth, then a singularly handsome man of the D'Orsay order, was a frequent visitor in the *Jack Sheppard* days, and Alfred Crowquill. I can also remember Alfred Bunn, and always thought that Thackeray must have sketched the portrait of Mr. Dolphin, the manager, which appears in *Pendennis*, from him.* John Braham, a very small

* Here is a characteristic letter from Bunn to my father:

"My dear Fred,—With taste and judgment 'both strong *against* the deed,' I have resolved on coming down to the blackguard level to-morrow, and the wonders of old Drury Lane, the glories of its pageantries, the splendour of its decorations, aristocracy, dancers, foreigners, etc., are all going, going for the small sum of 4*s.* to the boxes, 2*s.* to the pit, and 1*s.* to the gallery.

To Mr. Garrick, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. John Kemble, Mr. Kean, *et hoc genus omne*, I cry, 'Thou canst not say I did it.'—Ever thine,

A. BUNN."

Jewish man in a black wig, I remember as a visitor. I have heard Mrs. Honey—a very lovely woman—Mrs. Waylett, and Mrs. Keeley "trying over" their songs at the little piano.

Walking with my father in the neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament, he was spoken to, on the same afternoon, by the great Duke of Wellington and Daniel O'Connell. He bade me remember the circumstance when I "grew up." The appearance of each of these men—the Duke with his buttoned blue coat, white duck trousers, and high stock with a buckle showing at the back of his neck; and O'Connell, with a round, good-humoured, thoroughly Irish face, and a springy jaunty walk—is perfectly vivid in my memory. Mr. George Jones, R.A., a painter of battle-pieces, etc., who died some years ago, specially prided himself on his resemblance to the Duke of Wellington, and used to "dress up to the character." Some one mentioned the likeness to the Duke, and added, "It must be great, for people in the street often speak to him for your Grace." "Very strange," muttered the great man; "no one ever spoke to me for Mr. Jones!"

Connected with the Adelphi house are my recollections of Liston, with his face like a grotesque mask, pendulous cheeks, snub nose, and fishy eyes—a very dull man, as he seemed to me; of George Rodwell, the composer of much beautiful music, but who gained his barrel-organ celebrity by "Jolly Nose" and "Nix my dolly, pals," two songs in *Jack Sheppard*; of M. Sola, a strange blear-eyed old foreigner, in some way connected with music, but who was principally engaged in selling bargains of all kinds to his friends. He sold a watch to my mother, with the curious recommendation, "He ver' good vatch: you vear him two year, and then sell him again." And I can distinctly recollect meeting him in the Strand vainly trying to conceal a full-sized drawing-room looking-glass under the folds of his scanty blue cloak.

To us would come across, from the house on Adelphi Terrace, Miss Maria B. Hawes, then in the first flush of her

success as an oratorio singer; and from her pretty *cottage ornée*, The Rosery, in Old Brompton—now pulled down, and with a row of stucco houses standing "where once the garden smiled"—would arrive my earliest literary friend, Mrs. S. C. Hall, bringing for my delectation a copy of her annual, *The Juvenile Budget*, in which she and Mrs. Hofland, Miss Pardoe, and Miss Jewsbury, wrote most charming stories for children. To a hurried consultation would come Charles Tomkins and Tom Pitt, the scene-painters, in their canvas clothes, splashed with dabs of colour; or Gallott the prompter; or Sam Lover, with a ballad for Mrs. Fitzwilliam or Miss Fortescue, now Lady Gardner, on whose performance of Barnaby Rudge Dickens used "to dwell with a thorough liking;" or Edmund Byng, my eccentric godfather; or Lord Clanricarde, who in after years proved in the kindest and handsomest manner that he had not forgotten the old days of fun and frolic in "the little Adelphi."

CHAPTER II.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION.

1836—1847.

It was in the "old Adelphi house," as we used to call it, the private portion of the theatre-premises, No. 411 Strand, that I received the elementary portion of my education, being taught "my letters" by my aunt, Miss Eliza Yates, my father's unmarried sister, who lived with us, and in whom I found my chief playmate and companion. What with incessant acting and very frequent rehearsals—for the "runs" of pieces, now so common, were absolutely unknown in those days, and the entertainment was constantly changed—my mother had in a great measure to delegate her household and maternal duties to her sister-in-law, who fulfilled them with much affectionate devotion. My "aunt Eliza" is associated with my earliest recollections; under her supervision I learned my alphabet from a collection of large capital letters, furnished by the printer of the theatre, and spread out on the floor, where I lay. When I had arrived at the dignity of spelling, I used to check my newly-acquired accomplishment by endeavouring to read the words on the omnibuses, which passed the window in such numbers; my great desire, as well as that of my kind instructress, being that I should acquit myself well in the eyes of my grandmother, a rather severe old lady, who was also a resident member of the family. My recollections of her are of the faintest; but I have an idea that she rather sat upon the little household, that she was in the position of one who had seen better days, and that she despised the theatre, while living

on its proceeds. I remember, too, that frequent card-parties had to be given for her amusement, and that she did not scruple to express her astonishment and displeasure at the singular conduct of my father and mother, who, coming in utterly exhausted from their work, preferred going to rest to taking a "hand at cards" with the old lady's friends.

There was, in truth, but little chance of rest for my father in those days, and there can be no doubt that his early death was mainly attributable to the perpetual work, worry, and excitement in which his life was passed. To be foremost in the race, to beat his compeers in the production of any novelty, was his great object, and many a time had he to pay for his rashness and want of deliberation. On one occasion a rumour reached London that a great success had been achieved in Paris by the performance of a set of Hindoo dancers, called *Les Bayadères*, who were supposed to be priestesses of a certain sect; and the London theatrical managers were at once on the *qui vive* to secure the new attraction. Three of them—Laporte, of the Italian Opera; Alfred Bunn, of Drury Lane; and my father—set out for Paris much about the same time. It was *diligence*-travelling or posting in those days, and the man with the loosest purse-strings went the fastest. My father had concluded his arrangement with the *Bayadères* before his brother managers arrived in Paris. Shortly afterwards, the Hindoo priestesses appeared at the Adelphi. They were utterly uninteresting, wholly unattractive. My father lost £2,000 by the speculation; and in the family they were known as the "Buy-em-dears" ever after.

Novelty was imperative, no matter what shape it might take. I have already mentioned Bihin the giant and Harvey Leach the dwarf, but have said nothing of the "real water," which at one time was contained in an enormous tank under the flooring of the stage, and, like Mr. Crummles's pump and tubs, had a drama written for it: *Die Hexen am Rhein* (The Witches of the Rhine), a mediæval romantic play, in the course of which the hero plunged into the tank, and swam about in sight of the

audience. Possibly in connection with the tank of real water, and certainly in search of novelty, my father seems to have offered an engagement to Grace Darling, of the Longstone lighthouse, the heroine of the wreck of the *Forfarshire*, as a letter from her, amongst his papers, thanks him for his proposals, which she is compelled to decline, as acceptance would be against the wishes of the Duke of Northumberland and the "ladies and gentlemen" who have subscribed to purchase her "a comfortable annuity."

Another proof of my father's readiness to seize on popular topics is to be found in his production of a version of *Ten Thousand a Year*, a novel then creating considerable sensation, dramatised by its author, Samuel Warren, Q.C., from whom there is a very characteristic letter, mentioning that "notwithstanding his engagement in three most important cases at Westminster," he hopes to be in time for rehearsal.

But there is no doubt that the success which attended the little Adelphi Theatre in those days was the adaptability of its company for developing its "great speciality," melodrama, and more especially of the "Adelphi drama," which was compounded by Buckstone out of ingredients some of which were original, but most derived from pieces of the Ambigu or the Porte St. Martin. Chief in interest and attraction among these were *Victorine* and *The Wreck Ashore*. *Victorine* was the first of those pieces in which a large portion of the action occurs during a dream, and which—modern playgoers will remember *Uncle Dick's Darling* as an example—have always been successful. But of all melodramas which I have seen, *The Wreck Ashore* bears away the palm. There was one scene, where two frightened sisters, played by my mother and Mrs. Fitzwilliam, in a lonely cottage on the marshes, see the latch of the door slowly lifted, where the absorbing interest was positively painful. *The Rake and his Pupil*,* *Henriette the Forsaken*, *Isabel*, *or*

* *The Rake and his Pupil* was before my theatre-going time; but I had heard the name when a child, and it was brought to my mind many years afterwards, in a very singular way. I was going to dine with Charles

Woman's Life, were all in the same category, and written by the same author, whose most successful work of all, *The Green Bushes*, was not produced until ten years later, and for quite a different group of actors.

In connection with this subject, it will be interesting to note the extraordinary difference between the prices realized by dramatic authors for their work in the present day and fifty years ago. I make the following extract from a letter of Buckstone's to my father: "As we have had no decided arrangement about *The Rake*, and as whatever terms we can agree upon about that piece will influence my future doings, I wish to state a few matters for you to think about: 50*l.* was mentioned by you for it, and afterwards an additional 10*l.* for securing the acting copyright in the provinces for twelve months. I was allowed 60*l.* for *Henriette*, and really, with the prices I can now command, I am working at a very low rate in letting you have three-act dramas at that sum. For a successful three-act play you ought, I think, to afford me 70*l.*, such sum securing to you the sole acting right for ever in London, and to you alone for

---

Mathews in the early spring of 1869, and was making my way from the Gloucester Road Station, where I had alighted, and which had not been long opened, across a new and unformed district, as a short cut to Pelham Crescent, where C. J. M. resided, when I saw a man pacing up and down before a small tavern. He was muttering aloud; and as I came upon him I distinctly heard him pronounce the name "Frederick Yates." I stopped, and asked him what name he had mentioned. He at once repeated "Frederick Yates;" then added, "The cleverest actor I ever saw, sir! By far the cleverest! You never saw him, sir; you're too young! But at the Adelphi Theatre, in *The Rake and his Pupil*, to see him act, to hear him repeat 'The Baron Somebody with his hump, and the Baroness Somebody a frump,' it was magnificent!" A little further conversation proved that the poor fellow was a lunatic. He enlarged upon the subject of his wrongs, specially his having been incarcerated, and would not revert to the theatre. But it was a most wonderful thing that I, who alone of all living people would have had the slightest interest in Frederick Yates, should have been passing as he uttered the name. I told the story the next day to Dickens who was very much struck by the coincidence, and used frequently to refer to it.

one year, or, say, to the 1st October following its production." And in another letter, in 1839: "I will do your piece for the opening, and a new three-act drama for Mrs. Yates, company, and self, for my old terms for the pair, viz., two seventies. I really cannot say less. I now get 100*l.* for a three-act piece, when it only runs a few nights. I bring out a full three-act comedy at the Haymarket immediately on the close of Covent Garden, and am now cogitating a farce for Power and myself."

So we see that at his increased rates Buckstone received 70*l.* for a three-act drama, and 10*l.* for the provincial rights for twelve months. Now I have been furnished by a worthy friend of mine, a writer of melodrama of the present day, whose name, for obvious reasons, I shall not mention, with a return of the fees which he has received for one piece alone, which at the time of writing are within 150*l.* of a total of *ten thousand pounds*, and which are still rolling in at the rate of 100*l.* a week! In this return, America, really unknown in earlier days as a money-producer for the English dramatist, figures for 800*l.* more than London; the provinces, valued by Buckstone at a 10*l.* note, yield nearly 3,000*l.*; while Australia, at that time chiefly known as a receptacle for convicts, yields more than double the amount originally paid by my father for the whole acting copyright. Buckstone's mention of Power in his letter reminds me that I once accompanied my father when he went to call on Tyrone Power on some business matter, and that when in Liverpool, during our holidays, we went over the *President*, the American steamer, which was ultimately lost, with Power on board. I remember a line in a newspaper of the day: "America has lost her *President*, and England her Power."

I do not suppose I could have been more than five years old, when it was determined to send me to a preparatory school at Highgate, which was strongly recommended by my godfather, Mr. Hodgson, whose nephews had been pupils there. It was kept by an English lady, married to a German merchant named Kieckhöfer, which, I need scarcely say, in boys' mouths at once became "Kickover;" and to her house I was taken one after-

noon by my aunt Eliza, in a hackney-coach, amongst the mouldy straw at the bottom of which—and which even now I seem to smell—I cast myself down on our journey up Highgate Hill, and implored to be taken home. A stately but kindly lady was Mrs. Kieckhöfer, presiding over an admirably-kept school; and a jolly old German was "old Kick," her husband, who would call me into his dressing-room and give me pears or rose-lozenges, and talk to me of my father, and specially of my mother—the sweetest woman that ever lived.

Do you remember in *Nicholas Nickleby* where the newly-arrived little boy is sitting on his play-box? "'That's Belling,' said Mr. Squeers. 'He's a Taunton boy, he is.' 'Is he, indeed?" said Mr. Snawley, *looking at him as though he were a natural curiosity.*" I have so often thought of this passage in later life, when reflecting on my own early school-days. From the earliest I was always regarded as a natural curiosity. It is, of course, very different now, when Thespis Major is the captain of the boats at Eton, and Tommy Roscius plays in the Harrow Eleven: but in those days actors, if not a proscribed race, were very seldom met with out of such literary or fast-fashionable circles as were brought more immediately into connection with them; and their children were not likely to be found at any upper or middle-class school. To a previous generation belongs the story of the alarmed village through which ran the cry, "The läkers [actors] are coming! take the linen off the hedge!" for fear it should be stolen. And I have heard my grandfather mention his father being followed by an excited crowd through the streets of Newcastle with the cry, "Play-actor! play-actor! Smash his head agen the wall!" Such amenities as these were out of date; but actors were so seldom seen off the stage as to make any of their belongings special objects of half-comical, half-compassionate interest: and to this minute I can see the nudge given, and hear the whispered "son of"—"Adelphi," as I was pointed out to the friends of other boys who had come to see them. Most of these people—one of the first of them was old Mr.

Gillman the surgeon, the friend of Coleridge, who died at Highgate in his house—most of these people seemed pleased at the idea of looking at such an exceptional little personage; and spoke a few kind words to me; but others would rather recoil, as though the taint of the stage might be contagious. In this place I may mention, as characteristic of the times, that a well-known clergyman, the Rev. Henry Blunt—whose work on the "Pentateuch" still survives, and who was an intimate friend as well as a patient of my uncle, Dr. Yates—declined to meet my father and mother on account of the wickedness of their calling.

I was four years at Mrs. Kieckhöfer's preparatory school, where, I think, all things considered, I must have been tolerably happy, and where I certainly picked up a fair grounding of education. The disagreeables which remain in my mind were connected with the smallness of the playground and the length of the walks: a long file of boys, two and two, perambulating the country in the hot summer's afternoons, baked by the sun and mad with thirst. Often and often on those occasions have I, lagging behind on some pretext, furtively lapped the water from the horse trough in front of a tavern door, to the horror of the poor lady-attendant who had us in charge. Our guardians and instructors at Mrs. Kieckhöfer's, with the exceptions of the writing-master and the drill-sergeant, were all ladies; even our dancing was acquired under female tuition, our teacher being a nice brisk old lady—a Miss Dennet, who, with her sisters, had once belonged to "His Majesty's Theatre," and who, I think, made a special favourite of me in consequence of my connection with "the profession."

Pleasantest among these recollections are those of the "Saturday till Monday" holidays, spent with my maternal grandfather, John Brunton, to whom I have before made allusion. A retired actor, living on a small pension allowed him by his sister, Lady Craven, he had not the faintest trace of his former calling, but more resembled a hearty old veteran of the Navy, for which profession he had always had a love, and

in which two of his sons had distinguished themselves, one having been second lieutenant of the *Hecla* in Sir Edward Parry's Arctic Expedition. Sedulously attended by an unmarried daughter, the old gentleman was perfectly happy in his little cottage at Kentish Town—then one of the prettiest and most rural suburbs, and very conveniently situated near Highgate—engaged in the cultivation of his garden, where he had a specialty for dahlias; in reading his newspaper, and in holding his own against a few neighbours at whist or cribbage. To me he was the kindest and most indulgent of men; the cheeriest, jolliest, most lovable of friends. He was full of wonderful stories, he had the heartiest laugh, he smoked a churchwarden pipe—in itself a laxity of morals which commanded my highest childish admiration.

We dined early—two o'clock—in Kentish Town, and had the most delightful hot suppers at nine; suppers of sprats, or kidneys, or tripe and onions, with foaming porter and hot grog afterwards—grog which I used to sip in a teaspoon from the old gentleman's tumbler as I sat on his knee. Years afterwards, when I might have been of the mature age of twelve, at a Christmas gathering at our house there was some talk about what were the strongest or the pleasantest "nightcaps;" and I frightened most of the company by giving my vote for gin. "Gin, sir!" exclaimed an old maiden lady—my godmother; "what a horrible idea! and from a child, too! Where did you ever *taste* gin?" The old gentleman was present; but even in those days I had some *savoir faire*. I saw the appealing look on his face, and somehow got out of the difficulty.

In the long summer evenings, and when his rheumatism permitted, my grandfather and I, accompanied by his terrier "Vic," would walk across the fields to Copenhagen House—a kind of tea-gardens situated somewhere near Pentonville—or further afield to the Hornsey Sluice-house, a similar resort, which had, I fancy, some connection with the New River, and stood somewhere in the locality of the present Finsbury Park. Both these places have long since been taken down.

In the Kentish Town cottage I made my first acquaintance with the journals of my native land. There was no penny press in those days, and the finances of the grand-paternal establishment were not in the condition to afford a high-priced daily paper. The old gentleman used to console himself with the *Morning Advertiser*, which was "lent" from the adjacent Tally-ho tavern, and came round with the early dinner-beer. But my newspaper-reading was confined to Sundays, when I devoted myself to the *Sunday Times* and the *Weekly Dispatch*. I suppose the latter was at the height of its fame just then; but the political letters of "Publicola" and "Gracchus" had naturally no attraction for me, and I was far more taken with the glimpses of life revealed in the fashionable novels of Lady Blessington, instalments of which were published by the *Sunday Times*. I have a recollection, too, of seeing that notorious journal, the *Satirist*, at Kentish Town, and of having read from it an account of a duel between Lord Castlereagh and the husband of Madame Grisi, the opera-singer, whose name has escaped me. The editor of this journal, one Barnard Gregory, a clever man, but a desperate scoundrel, afterwards attempted to appear on the stage as Hamlet, but was hissed off by the audience, not on account of his histrionic shortcomings, but of his private character.

A strange medley of reminiscences of the events which happened in my youth remains in my mind, incongruous and disjointed, and of so diverse a character that I often wonder how I heard of them. The marriage of the Queen and Prince Albert I recollect well; and remember the windows of the stationers' shops at Highgate filled with a mild pictorial joke, "The Windsor Pear"—a representation of a fine specimen of the fruit, with what theatrical people would call a "practical" rind, which, being lifted, discovered portraits of the Queen and Prince inside. In the same shops the portrait of Cocking, an aeronaut, who was killed attempting to descend in a parachute. Almost my earliest terror was excited by the narrative of the adventures of "Spring-heeled Jack"—a ghost which had been

playing up its pranks, springing on to the backs of women and nearly frightening them to death, and the scene of whose adventures some of the narrators, knowing the advantage of local colour, had laid in Highgate. I believe there was no foundation for this statement, though it caused a perfect panic among the little boys at Mrs. Kieckhöfer's; and it certainly was not borne out by another contemporary rumour that the real perpetrator of the practical joke was the Marquis of Waterford, who was not likely to choose that quiet, and very inaccessible, suburb as the place for his nightly exploits.

But at that time Lord Waterford occupied a remarkable position in the public eye as a daring and dangerous practical joker, and every unexplained exploit was accredited to him. He was, it was said, rather more than eccentric—the result of a crack on the head which he had received from a *morgenstern*, the heavy club with which the Stockholm watchmen were armed, while carrying on his nocturnal vagaries in the Swedish capital. He had, it was said, sworn that he would catch and shave Mr. Muntz, the member for Birmingham, the only Englishman in those days who wore a large beard. Mr. Muntz, on hearing of this threat, bought a huge stick, without which he was never seen in public. The Earl of Cardigan was another nobleman whose personality was much impressed on my childhood, owing to the notoriety which he obtained in consequence of his quarrels with his brother officers, and the duels arising therefrom. He would seem to have been a man of violent temper and offensive *hauteur;* but he was an intimate friend of my great-uncle, Colonel Brunton, who had brought him to our house, and consequently I was his sworn and only champion at the school. Another theme of discussion amongst us children was the adventures of the "boy Jones"—a lad who was found secreted under a sofa in Buckingham Palace, and whose real reason for being there, unless it was mere childish curiosity, could never be discovered.

Murders, too! How we would lie trembling in our little beds as we talked them over! The dreadful Greenacre, who

cut up the body of his victim, carrying the head wrapped up in a handkerchief on his knees in the omnibus, and who was supposed to have nearly fainted with fright when, on asking the conductor the fare, the man replied, "Sixpence *a head!*"—at least, so ran the story; the horrible Daniel Good, who had special interest for me from his being a coachman at Roehampton, where we had friends; and above all, the monster Courvoisier, the Swiss valet, who murdered his master, Lord William Russell, whose atrocities are impressed upon me from my having heard them much discussed, more particularly the style of defence adopted by his counsel, Charles Philips, at the house of Mr. Clarke, senior partner of my father's solicitors, Messrs. Clarke, Finmore and Fladgate, of Craven Street, Strand, who resided on Highgate Hill, and with whom I often spent the Sunday afternoons. Mr. Clarke, who was afterwards solicitor to the Ordnance Office, was a man very well known in legal circles, and entertained largely; he and his family were very kind to me, and I used hugely to enjoy listening to the talk of the guests, with whom the house was filled. The Eglinton tournament, in which Louis Napoleon, afterwards Emperor of the French, took part; the Chartist riots at Newport, headed by Frost and Williams; and the frightful accident on the Paris and Versailles Railway, when all the passengers in a long train were burned to death, the doors on both sides of the carriages being locked, so that escape was impossible, are all well-remembered events.

Even in those my juvenile days I was a kind of news-provider for my school-mates, and my return from a casual visit home, or to my grandfather's, were days looked forward to by them, as I was sure to bring back some stories which I had heard or read. I was an eager devourer of all kinds of literature from my earliest years, and used to read, stretched on the hearthrug, with my book between my elbows, on which I rested, or at night curled up in a chair, with a candle and the snuffer-tray in close proximity.

The casual mention of the snuffer-tray, an article never seen

by modern readers, brings to my mind a thousand and one changes in things, manners, and customs between the present time and the days of my childhood, forty years ago, which will properly find mention in this chapter. In those days, though there was gas in the streets and shops, and wax-candles for the great ones of the earth, those who could not afford such luxuries were compelled to seek their illumination in tallow-candles, which required snuffing—*i.e.*, the removal of their burnt wicks—about every quarter of an hour. "Require no snuffing," was the boast in the advertisement of the Palmer's composite candles, which were the first improvement, and one variety of which was, I remember, burned in a lamp, forced down on a spring into a socket, and liable to shoot out like a rocket. Mention of Palmer's name reminds me that there were no so-called "night-lights," only a long "farthing rush-light," set up in the middle of a huge tin lighthouse perforated with round holes, the reflection of which on the walls and ceiling was ghostly in the extreme; no lucifers, but a round tinder-box, with a flint, and a bit of steel on which to strike it, and a bundle of long sulphur-tipped slips of wood called matches. The lucifer, or Congreve match as it was called, as originally produced, was ignited by friction on sandpaper, and had a very unpleasant smell.

In those days the "new Police," as they were still called—for they had not long been invented by Sir Robert Peel in supersession of the old watchmen—were very different in appearance from our present guardians. They wore swallow-tail blue coats, with bright metal buttons, and, in summer, white duck trousers and white Berlin gloves. In lieu of helmet they had an ordinary chimney-pot hat, only of extra strength and stiffness, and with a glazed oilskin top. Their rivals in the affections of domestic servants, the Household troops, were also very differently costumed: in place of the tunic they wore a scarlet swallow-tail, with ridiculous worsted epaulettes, a huge stock under the chin, white ducks, and a bearskin shako almost twice the height of that now carried. Neither policeman nor

private soldier was permitted to grow moustache or beard. The "General," or country, postman wore a scarlet swallow-tail coat; the "twopenny," or London district, man a blue uniform; a collection for the night mails was made at 5 P.M., by men who paraded the streets each armed with a bell, which he rang lustily; and many of the despatches of letters from the head-office, then in Lombard Street, to the various sub-offices were made by horse-post, the letters being enclosed in leather valises, which were strapped behind the post-boys.

The dress of the men and women of that time can be studied in the illustrations to *Nicholas Nickleby* and other contemporary publications: "dandies" wore high-collared coats and roll-collared waistcoats, short in the waist; round their necks were high stiff stocks, with "an avalanche of satin" falling over the chest, and ornamented with a large and a small pin connected with a thin chain; and high sharp-pointed—almost Gladstonian—shirt-collars. No gentleman could wear anything in the day-time but Wellington boots, high up the leg, over which the trousers fitted tightly, covering most of the foot, and secured underneath by a broad strap. The great-coats of those days were no misnomers. They were really enormous garments, adorned with several capes and deep pockets; they were Chesterfields, Petershams, Taglionis, Sylphides; and well I recollect some splendid driving-coats, ornamented with enormous mother-o'-pearl buttons as big as crown-pieces, with pictures on them of mail-coaches going full speed, which were exhibited to admiring crowds in the tailor's window in Regent Street. Afterwards came the neat paletot, the blanket-like poncho, the blue pilot, and the comfortable Inverness. Some old gentlemen wore cloaks, too, in my youth; and I have a dim recollection of one kind, properly, I believe, called *roquelaure*, but known to the London public as a "rockelow."

Other personages of the streets, common in those days, have long since disappeared: the dustman, with his call "Dust O!" and his ever-ringing bell; the "buy-a-broom" girl, with her Dutch garb and *jödling* voice; the thin Turk, turban-topped,

and vending rhubarb from a tray suspended from his neck; the Jew boys who hung about the coach-offices, with their nets of lemons or oranges, and were closely elbowed by the peripatetic cutler, the blades of whose knives were always open, and constantly being polished and sharpened on a tattered leather glove. Gone is the three-hatted, bag-bearing Jew, with his never-ceasing cry of "Old clo', clo'!" gone are the Quakers —the men broad-brimmed, shovel-hatted, stiff-collared, and gaitered; the women generally pretty, with hideous bonnets and pretty dove-coloured raiment.

Well do I recollect the introduction, simultaneously, I imagine, of the hansom cab—then called "patent-safety"—and the four-wheeler. Before them we had the lumbering musty pair-horse hackney-coach, which was the decayed and disused "chariot" of former greatness, or the two-wheeled cabriolet—a dangerous vehicle, with a hood for the fare, and a tiny perch by his side for the driver, and which is to be seen in the illustrations to *Pickwick*, where Mr. Jingle first appears on the scene. People nowadays will smile to hear that for years after their introduction it was considered "fast" to ride in a hansom, and its use was tabooed to ladies. There were omnibuses, but nothing like the present commodious vehicles; narrow, cramped, with a seat across the end, with flat roof, and no "knifeboard" accommodation outside. In those early days of railways the carriages had not attained their present amount of comfort: the first-class was, of course, an immense improvement on the cramped and stuffy mail-coach; but the second-class had no linings or cushions; and the third-class was little better than a cattle-truck. Of the mail-coaches themselves I have not much recollection, though, as the "Great North Road" lay through Highgate, I must have seen them very often. But I well remember the Brighton coaches, and my astonishment at my father shaking hands with the coachman, who was Sir Vincent Cotton; and the laughter at my godfather, Edmund Byng, when he told us that, passing by the White Horse Cellar, a coachman had familiarly tapped him on the shoulder with his

whip, and, looking up in a rage, he had recognised his "rascally nephew, Edward Thynne."

Clean-shaven faces were uncommon; a pair of "mutton-chop" whiskers was *de rigueur;* but a "pair of mustachios," as they were called, was never seen, save on a cavalry officer, a dancing-master, or a "snob," and the cultivation of a beard was wholly confined to foreigners.* In those days it was no uncommon sight, on looking up at the cry of "Sweep!" to see a sooty imp protruding from a chimney-pot, and waving his brush. This was the veritable "climbing-boy," who was popularly supposed to be the slave of a tyrannical master, whose ascent of a difficult chimney was said to be hastened by the burning straw in the grate beneath; who wore a brass plate, with his master's name and address, on the front of his cap; who danced in the streets on May Day in company with Jack-in-the-Green, "my lord," and the girl who rattled the ladle as a suggestion for donations; and who—the little sooty imp—was, in all our childish minds, the hero of the story in which the tired-out little sweep lay down on the bed in Montagu House, and being found there, was recognised as the child who had been stolen thence some years previously.

What a change in the aspect of the streets of London since those days! Gone is the colonnade over the shops in the Quadrant, which extended from the County Fire Office to Glasshouse Street, which was taken down, partly to give more light to the shop-keepers, but mainly at the pertinacious insistance of one of them, a stationer named Dolby, who denounced the covered way as affording a retreat for "dissolute persons." Poor "dissolute

* In 1850, when Albert Smith had just returned from his Nile trip and his month at Constantinople, with a flowing beard, he was a candidate for the Garrick Club. It was unofficially notified to him from the committee that his beard was most objectionable. A. S. distinctly refused to be terrorised into shaving, but declared he would have no objection to modify the hirsute adornment after his election. The "beard movement," as it was called, by which we got rid of the imperative necessity for the appalling razor, did not take place until after the Crimean War. It was immensely assisted by an article in *Household Words*, entitled "Why Shave?"

persons," ever hunted into the hard, cold streets! Gone is the Rookery, a conglomeration of slums and alleys in the heart of St. Giles's, a resort of really desperate characters, which was pulled down and smashed up when New Oxford Street was made. Before that, all the vehicular traffic, and every pedestrian who did not care to run the risk of being mobbed and hustled, turned off to the right on reaching the commencement of Tottenham Court Road, where stands Meux's Brewery, and, making a considerable *détour*, passing St. Giles's Church, and through Broad Street, Bloomsbury, came out into Holborn just by the top of Drury Lane. That was the regular north-western route to the City when I first went there in '47, and now it is almost a desert. Gone is Middle Row, an island of houses in a sea of mud, situated in Holborn, opposite the end of Gray's Inn Lane. Gone are Holborn Hill, and Snow Hill, and Skinner Street, the mountain-pass of the great Farringdon range, done away with by the great engineering triumph of the Holborn Viaduct. The L.C.C. or London Conveyance Company, which owned many omnibuses in those days, used to have a man stationed at the top of Holborn Hill to jerk the skid under the wheels of the omnibuses, and another at the bottom to jerk it off; and in bad weather these poor wretches were scarcely recognisable as human beings from their incrustations of mud. On Snow Hill was the Saracen's Head, where Mr. Squeers used to put up.

Gone is Smithfield, with its very wide open pens and cattle-hutches; and gone with it is a good deal of the scandal of driving the wretched beasts through the streets, and whacking and torturing them in the most dreadful fashion. Enormous hordes of cattle for Smithfield Monday market, then—not as now, sent up by rail, but driven long and tedious journeys—used to arrive at Highgate on the Saturday, and pass the Sunday in the fields let out for the purpose. Gone is Cranbourn Alley, the home of the bonnet-makers, and Leicester Square such as I first remember it—a howling wilderness, with broken railings, a receptacle for dead cats and every kind of abomination; then covered over by the hideous building for Mr.

Wyld's great Globe; and lastly in its present pretty and cheerful condition. Gone is pleasant Brompton, transformed into South Kensington, and now absorbing dear Old Brompton, with its broad acres of market-garden, its green lanes, pretty cottages, and general rurality. And gone, too, is a bevy of terraces, and streets, and places, rejoicing in the generic name of "Upper Eaton," and situate between Grosvenor Place and the Victoria Station. The magnificent Grosvenor Gardens stand on the site which they occupied—cheery homes of the St. George's medical students, always redolent of pipes and beer.

When I had achieved the age of nine it was considered that I had sufficiently drained the Pierian spring, as supplied by Mrs. Kieckhöfer, and that I should be removed to some establishment where a better quality of the article was on tap. My father had a strong wish that my ultimate destination should be Holy Orders, and that I should at once go to his old school, Charterhouse, and thence to Oxford. But there were many difficulties of various kinds against taking even the first step in that direction; and, after some discussion, it was decided that I should be sent to Sir Roger Cholmeley's Foundation School at Highgate, now known as Highgate School, an endowed foundation of Elizabeth's reign, which, after a long unacknowledged existence, was beginning to prosper under its newly-appointed head-master, the Reverend John Bradley Dyne, of Wadham College, Oxford. It was, of course, a "day school," and, though boarders were received at one or two of the masters' houses, it was arranged that I should go to live with some friends of Mrs. Kieckhöfer, resident in Highgate, who had just fallen into financial trouble, and who proposed thus to increase their means.

They were singularly nice people—I will call them Stone—and exceptionally unfitted for the duties which they had taken upon themselves. It was all very well when I was their only boarder; and, being constantly either at school or in the playing-fields with their eldest son, a lad of my own age, I made little difference in their arrangements. But when their ambition

increased, and they took more boarders, and removed from their pretty little villa to a huge ramshackle house in the village, in which they had only a little oasis of decent furniture and appointments in a desert of schoolroom and playroom, and bare floors and forms and tressel deal tables, where they could seldom escape from the perpetual noise and racket and discomfort of a dozen strong, hot, sturdy boys, with all the selfishness, insensibility, and obstinacy which characterize the race, they must have thought their money hardly earned indeed. Mrs. Stone was a charming little woman, fairly young, pretty, accomplished, ladylike; she used to work like a slave, and we scoundrel boys used to tyrannize over her like Turks, find ont her weak points—which were, of course, her children—and attack her through them, worry her life almost out of her, and she never repined.

I am not sure that, with all her gentle kindness, she was as much liked by most of the boys as her husband; I know that with me he was the greater favourite. This was because, even with the difference in our ages, we had many tastes in common: he often said I was more like him in my ideas than his own son, who was a studious, practical, earnest fellow, and who now holds one of the most important commercial positions in London. Mr. Stone was a bit of a Bohemian and a great character; and I suppose, even in those days, character study had a fascination for me. He was a young man still—only a little over thirty, I should say; but we never could clearly make out what had been his previous career. He never actually said it, but he certainly insinuated that he had been a cavalry officer, in some regiment of Dragoon Guards, we thought; a sword and sabretache were suspended on the wall of his dressing-room; an *Army List* and a handsome book of coloured plates of the uniforms of the different regiments were among his treasures; and he had a habit of throwing himself into a fencing attitude, and delivering himself of a "pass" with his stick at any post or tree we might meet with. And yet my firm belief is that he had not the faintest connection with the army, but had been a

clerk to his father, who had failed as a banker. But, for an eager enthusiastic boy, he was the most delightful of friends. He was the bright side of Micawber, the constant anticipation of something good about to "turn up;" he was full of good stories—not merely anecdotes and jokes, though he had a supply of those, but long dramatic stories, which he told admirably. He was a believer in ghosts, about which he had innumerable legends. Best of all, he was the first who told me of Walter Scott and Dickens, lending me the treasured volumes, and sometimes reading out whole scenes of *Pickwick*, interrupting himself with his convulsions of hearty laughter.

When I was within a fortnight of my eleventh birthday, I experienced my first genuine grief—the death of my father. I do not know whether he was constitutionally consumptive—there were stories that he had been internally injured by an elephant which had been exhibited in some piece at the Adelphi, and into whose den he had rashly ventured; but the fact remains that, some five years previously, while playing *Robert Macaire*, he had broken a blood-vessel. He was so ill that his life was despaired of; and even on his convalescence he was warned that he ought never to act again. Such a warning to such a man was, of course, absurd; his natural energy, not to say irritability, rendered it impossible to abide by any rules he might prescribe for himself; and, moreover, his means of existence depended on his exertions. He resumed the exercise of his profession as soon as he thought he could do so with comparative safety.

In the winter of '41-42, while playing at the Adelphi in *Agnes St. Aubyn*, he again ruptured a vessel, but recovered sufficiently to play till the end of the season. Immediately at its close, on the night before Passion Week, my father and mother, with Wright, Paul Bedford, and one or two more of the company, started to play an engagement in Dublin. My father suffered considerably during the voyage, but rallied on reaching the shore. On the Saturday before Easter Sunday he was rehearsing Lord Skindeep in Jerrold's *Bubbles of the Day*,

when he suddenly felt ill, and, putting his handkerchief to his mouth, found he had ruptured another vessel, and was spitting blood. With great presence of mind he avoided giving any alarm to my mother, who was on the stage at the time; but merely saying, "Bess, I shall go away now," turned and went off to Morrison's Hotel, where they were staying. There he lay for some weeks, incapable of being moved, attended by the famous physician, Sir Philip Crampton; a certain Dr. Joy, afterwards well known in London as a factotum of Mr. Charles Kean's; and an apothecary, whose name escapes me, but of whom, to show "the ruling passion strong in death," I tell this anecdote.

The apothecary was a very strange-looking person, with odd features, peculiar hair, an enormous white neckcloth, and a singular way of carrying his cane. Now, the mobility of my father's features, and his power of reproducing facially as well as vocally the persons whom he imitated, was a frequent theme among his admirers. He had evidently, illness notwithstanding, been much struck by the appearance of his medical attendant, and one day, when my mother and Dr. Joy—I have heard the story from both—were coming into the room, he asked them to wait a moment. When he called, they entered, and found him sitting up in bed: he had arranged his hair, twisted his face, put on a towel for a cravat, got hold of a stick, and sat there the living image of the man he intended to represent.

The illness was evidently very serious this time, and it was decided, as soon as he was sufficiently strong to bear the journey, to get him to London, where he could be under the care of his old friend Dr. Billing and his brother, Dr. Yates, both of whom were well acquainted with his constitution and idiosyncrasy. The well-known tragedian, Mr. Macready, was acting in Dublin at the time, and sent my mother the following note, which I give in proof, despite of too many recorded instances of temper, egotism, and vanity, of his real goodness of heart and kindly feeling:

"Gresham's Hotel, June 8, 1842.

My dear Madam,—I will make no apology for intruding this hurried note upon you, as it will bear its own excuse with it. Let me, in as few words as possible, assure you of my deep sympathy in your late anxieties, and offer you my congratulations on the progress towards recovery which Mr. Yates has made, to whom I beg you will present my continued wishes for his perfect restoration. Having heard that you propose setting out for London to-night, I have thought it only right to apprise you of the necessity there is, if Mr. Yates travels in one of the railway carriage *beds*, to provide yourself in Liverpool with a very soft feather-bed *to lay upon the cushions of the common carriage-bed*, and also additional soft pillows. I know, from several night journeys, that the shaking of the carriage is *felt much more* in the recumbent than in the sitting posture, unless well eased by additional cushioning. There will be no difficulty in arranging this, and, well guarded in this respect, I have no doubt he will be able to reach London without inconvenience.—With my best wishes accompanying your journey, I am, dear madam, very faithfully yours, W. C. MACREADY."

They arrived in London on Friday, the 10th June, and my father was first taken to the Euston Hotel; but the noise and bustle being too much for him, he was removed to a furnished house, No. 4, Mornington Crescent, Hampstead Road, in the immediate neighbourhood. There he lay for ten days, with my mother and my aunt, Miss Yates, in constant attendance on him. On the tenth day my aunt, seeing my mother breaking down with fatigue, urged my father to use his authority in getting her to forego her watch, and get some rest. "Let her give me one more day," he said; "I won't ask for any more!" and the next day, at twenty minutes past three P.M., he passed away, perfectly sensible, and, with his last breath, blessing his wife, and commending her to the care of those who loved him.

He was buried on the following Sunday morning in the vaults of the parish church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. I can see the ceremony now, with myself as chief mourner, and my kind uncle, Dr. Yates; Mr. Gladstane, my father's partner in the Adelphi; my godfather, Frederick Hodgson; and Charles

Manby, my father's executor and my guardian, who only died at the end of July this year (1884): on the steps of the church were some of the Adelphi company—Wilkinson and Lyon, a well-known character, John Saunders, and some of the old servants of the theatre. So he left us: only forty-five, full of energy and enthusiasm, and just beginning to shake himself free from pecuniary trammels, and to take his proper position in that art of which he was so decided an ornament.

Extracts from the obituary notices of the journals of the day are before me, and in them I find willing tribute to his genius. "It may be truly said," says the *Standard*, "that Yates was one of the most versatile performers on the stage, which may, perhaps, account for his having had no decided *forte*. In tragedy, comedy, farce, and melodrama he was occasionally capital, and always respectable. His extraordinary talent as a manager has been universally acknowledged, and his loss will be severely felt by the playgoers of the metropolis. The command he possessed over the audience has been frequently exemplified; by one word addressed in his peculiar way he could quiet the most uproarious gallery, and secure the goodwill of his hearers under the most embarrassing circumstances."* The *Morning Herald* says: "As an actor, he exhibited wonderful versatility. At the Adelphi, he played whatever was wanted in the pieces produced; that is to say, not the best parts in the piece, but the parts he found it most difficult to get portrayed." The *Sunday Times*, recalling his early days at Covent Garden, says: "He played Frenchmen, Jews, Scotchmen; tragedy, comedy, farce; old men and walking gentlemen; and obtained the sobriquet of 'Kill Devil.' What nobody else would act

* There is a good story told of my father in connection with his power of quelling uproar among the audience. One night a tremendous row occurred at the end of the first act of a new piece. Loud cries for "Yates" brought my father on to the stage. "What is all this?" he asked peremptorily. Unintelligible yells and shouts from all parts of the house. "Look here!" said my father, on the first approach to silence, shaking his finger menacingly at the audience generally, "if there is any more of this disturbance, *you shall have your orders back!*"

was sent to Yates." The *Times* "regrets exceedingly to announce the demise of this most popular performer and manager;" and the *Morning Post* gives a long biography and laudatory notice of his labours.

My father was a man of extraordinary irritability, partly natural, partly induced by having to deal with such preternaturally stupid people as the lowest class of actors, the "supers," are found to be. I have seen him at rehearsal standing on a bench in the pit, and thence directing the movements of a crowd or a procession or some congregation of "supers" on the stage. "No, no! that's not a bit like it! Don't you hear what I say? When Mr. Lyon says, 'Behold your king!' you—" Then came instructions in detail. "Now, try again!" This would happen over and over again, until at last he would send his hat flying amongst them, and descend from his bench quivering with rage. But to his friends, male and female, he had many lovable qualities: he was an immense favourite with the public, and the grief at his death was very widespread. As to my mother, all thought the shock of her husband's loss would have killed her. To her dying day, eighteen years after, she cherished his memory, and kept the anniversary of his death in solitude and prayer.

Immediately after the funeral, my mother removed to a furnished house in Grove Terrace, Kentish Town, which she had taken for a few months, where the sweet air and perfect quiet—for in those days Kentish Town was a very pretty suburb, surrounded by broad fields, and permeated by the fresh air from Highgate and Hampstead—did her much good, and where I joined her in my midsummer holidays, then close at hand. Suddenly stricken down, my father had left his affairs in some confusion, and it was not known whether my mother would have sufficient income to enable her to retire wholly from the stage, a profession which she had always detested, and which had become more hateful to her since her husband's death, an event which she imagined, rightly or wrongly, had been hastened by his pursuance of it. Meanwhile she and my

godmother, Miss Fernyhough, a maiden lady of good Gloucestershire family, who had long had great affection for her and my father, and who proved herself a true friend, decided upon keeping house together. A very pretty villa with a huge garden was taken in the New Road running from Hammersmith to Shepherd's Bush, and there they remained for some time.

That Hammersmith house was the scene of a very funny incident, which impressed itself on my youthful mind. Hoping never to have to return to the hated theatre, and desirous of banishing as much as possible all memory of it, my mother desired me never, in any intercourse with the new servants, to refer to the Adelphi, or to hint at what had been my father's calling. Of course I obeyed, and we imagined our former state was wholly unknown to the household. But one day, as I was standing in the garden, watching the factotum manservant at work, he looked up and said, "Lord, sir, how you do remind me of your pa!" I was very much taken aback, and asked him if he had ever seen my father. "Seen him? Bless you!" he cried, in tones of genuine admiration, "shall I ever forget him as Robsperry at the Adelphi?" Then I ran off, and narrated what had happened to my mother, who, in the midst of her dismay, could not help smiling as she told me that Thomas had probably referred to a piece founded on certain incidents of the French Revolution, in which my father had played Robespierre.

I may here state that my mother's hope of quitting the stage was not destined to be fulfilled just then. The Adelphi property was sold to Mr. Benjamin Webster, the lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, who placed Madame Celeste at its head, and engaged an excellent company, in which my mother took a prominent position.

I look back to the six years which I passed at the Highgate School with very little pleasure. The head-master, Dr. Dyne, was a capable pedagogue enough, not more than usually narrow-minded, priggish, and conventional. He was a type of

the old-fashioned pedantic school, which looked upon Oxford as the "hub of the universe," thought the study of Latin and Greek the primary object of our creation, despised modern languages and foreign countries, and believed thoroughly in the virtues of corporal punishment. A desperate "swisher" the doctor, as I had cause to know, and not overburdened, to my thinking, with tact, judgment, or impartiality. He never liked me, and there was no particular reason why he should, for I had the theatrical taint; I was not a show-boy; I was not going to the university, where I could reflect credit on my teaching; and I was idle, mischievous, independent.

I must have learned something, for I was at the head of the fifth form when I left, at fifteen years of age; but I do not suppose what I acquired did me much good. I could read, construe, and parse the principal Latin and Greek poets—I am sure I could not do so now—but of English classics I was wholly ignorant: they formed no portion of the "curriculum." The study of modern language, though not absolutely tabooed, was minimised as much as possible. I do not imagine that the head-master or any of his assistants had ever crossed the Channel, or knew a syllable even of French, for which language their contempt was as great as Mr. Lillyvick's. The learning of French and German was an "extra" not supposed to be in the least necessary to an ordinary education, but to be paid for separately, and to be undergone by the boys, whose foolish parents insisted on their acquiring it, at times when the rest of the school was at play. A snuff-taking old French gentleman came once a week, and sat at the end of a table, while a dozen boys fought round it, larked, and shot paper pellets into his frizzy hair. He had no authority, poor old fellow, and there was no one to keep order; the whole thing was a farce; and had I not had a natural inclination for French study, and an interest in my *Télémaque* and my *Henriade* sufficient to induce me to read them in my play-hours and my holidays—interest such as I never could feel in my Homer, Virgil, or Herodotus —I should have left Highgate as ignorant of modern language

as did most of my compeers. But though I got little good from it, it is not to be denied that Highgate School, under Dr. Dyne's management, was very successful. Its pupils took scholarships and exhibitions, and good positions later on in the class-lists; and the tone of the school, which under the doctor's predecessors had suffered terribly, was entirely restored by him: a greater feat, it will be allowed, than the quintupling the number of pupils, which Dr. Dyne also accomplished during his *régime*.

I think I was tolerably popular among my school-fellows. I was in the first eleven at cricket, and, being tall and strong, was a tolerable performer at football and hockey. The two elder sons of Mr. Bethell, Q.C., afterwards Lord Westbury and Lord Chancellor—Richard, who succeeded his father, and is dead, and Slingsby, who is reading-clerk in the House of Lords —were at Highgate, where their father then lived, and both were friends of mine. On Richard Bethell's dun-coloured pony I had my first experience of equitation. Mr. Bethell had been acquainted with our head-master since their college-days. They were both Wadham men, and we boys were much interested in the career of the great lawyer, and hunted for his name in the newspaper reports of the courts. I can see him now, in his pew in the church, which directly fronted ours, bald-headed, with well-cut features and a general air of distinction, and I can hear the mincing tones, "Rich-ard, my dee-ah!" in which I often heard him address his son.

Closer in my intimacy was Thomas William Keith, now Accountant-General of the India Office, whose father and uncle at that time held good positions in its forerunner, the old East India House in Leadenhall Street. My friend's uncle, the elder of the brothers, who was for a long time the head of his office, had in his early days been a fellow-clerk with Charles Lamb, of whom he would tell good stories. I remember also his showing me a book which had been given him by Lamb, with a very Lamb-like inscription. It was a *Table of Interest*, and on the fly-leaf was written, "William Keith, from Charles

Lamb. In this book, unlike most others, the farther you progress the more the interest increases."

More intimate still, my close chum, such as every schoolboy worth anything must have, was Theodore Emilius Gahagan, of an Irish family well known in Anglo-Indian military life. A bright charming fellow, very clever, with a real appreciation of the ludicrous, and wonderfully funny himself, a capital draughtsman, a clever caricaturist, with a knack of verse-writing and an early inclination to literature. He and I were inseparable at school and in the holidays. When we left Highgate—we entered and left the school on the same day—he went to Addiscombe, then the military training-school for the H.E.I.C.S., whence, taking the highest honours, he passed into the Engineers. He was wounded in the Burmese War of 1852, and died some years afterwards in India of dysentery.

Other schoolfellows and friends of mine at Highgate were G. H. Tod-Heatly, well known in London society; Charles Marshall Griffith, Q.C.; Thomas Waraker, LL.D. of Cambridge; J. Cotter Morrison; B. B. Rogers, the translator of Aristophanes; Richard Goodhall Smith, formerly Librarian of the Middle Temple; and Colonel J. F. D. Donnelly, of the South Kensington Museum. Philip Worsley, known for his admirable translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, was also at Highgate, but immediately after my time.

Our yearly examinations were conducted by Dr. Russell, who had been my father's head-master at Charterhouse; and our prizes were distributed on speech-day by the Bishop of London—not the late Bishop, who was at that time incumbent of Muswell Hill, a neighbouring parish, but the great Charles James Blomfield, a fine handsome man, whom I recollect seeing in the pulpit, shorn indeed of his episcopal wig, for those monstrosities had just been given up, but wearing an enormous pair of lawn sleeves. The Duke of St. Albans, who lived then on Highgate Hill, at Holly Lodge, now occupied by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, was another speech-day visitor, and an unfailing sleeper during the greater portion of the entertainment.

At this period of my life the important question of what I was to do in the way of earning my living had been pretty well left to take care of itself. My mother's income, independent of her profession, was lamentably small. It was her greatest wish, and mine too, that she should retire as soon as possible from the stage, where, no longer a young woman nor a manager's wife, she found her position each year less tolerable; and it was plainly impossible for her to make me the allowance necessary for my maintenance at college, even if I had had the smallest inclination to go there. The idea of the Church had not been mooted for years; but I think my mother would have been very pleased could she have seen her way to insure my proper preparation for the Bar. This, however, even if it had not involved a University career, would have been impossible. Prudent friends, who knew the narrowness of our means, wisely insisted that I ought, instead of spending money, to be put to earning it as soon as possible, and that efforts should be made to obtain for me a nomination to a Government clerkship —appointments which in those happy days went, like kissing, by favour, and needed no superlative talent to win them from a struggling host of competitors. But I was only fifteen, full young to think of being settled for life, and sixteen was the lowest age at which one could enter the Government service; so, to my great delight, my mother determined that I should at once leave Highgate, and have a year's instruction in German and French, to be acquired in their respective countries. Her wisdom was approved by the friends whom she consulted, and in the summer of '46 I bade farewell to Highgate School.

Some friends of ours had connections residing, for economy's sake, at Düsseldorf, a pleasant town on the Lower Rhine, from whom we had information of a certain Herr Holthausen, a professor in the Gymnasium—it must be remembered that a German Gymnasium is a place of mental, and not muscular, exercise—who was willing to receive an English pupil into his house. I rather shied when I heard of the school, as I had decided that my term of pupilage, so far as going to school was

concerned, was over. I represented warmly to my mother that the one object of my going to Germany was to learn the language, and that there would be but little chance of my doing that if I were to take my share in the ordinary curriculum of a large public school; and if that were expected, I had better have remained at Highgate. Finally, it was arranged that I was to have nothing to do with the school, only to be a private pupil of the Professor's, resident in his house.

My mother had determined upon accompanying me to Düsseldorf, as nothing would have induced her to part with me without seeing the place where, and the people with whom, I was to be left. So she and her maid and I started off together. It was not my dear one's first experience of foreign lands. She had frequently been to Paris—which in those *diligence* days meant seeing a great deal more of France and French life than we do now in our five hours' whirl from Boulogne—and she and my father, snatching a brief holiday, had once made a rapid tour of the Rhine. I do not know whether Mr. Murray's famous handbooks were extant in those days, but I well remember my mother's telling me of the assistance and comfort they had obtained from the hints given in a volume, either in MS., or privately printed, by a young man who had recently been over the ground, and who was the son of some intimate friends—"young Martin Tupper," the venerable Proverbial Philosopher of later times.

We travelled slowly, for we had no occasion for haste, and my mother rejoiced in my delight at the novelty and the freedom from scholastic restriction. We stopped first at Dover, shunning the stately Ship, notorious for its immense charges, and going to an hotel (then just established), the *Dover Castle*, which still exists; crossing to Ostend, where we remained a day or two; on to Verviers for a night; and then to Cologne, where we put up at a second-rate but capital inn in the middle of the town, to which we had been recommended, the Brüsseler Hof—it has been long since done away with—where no one spoke English or French, and where we had to

endeavour to explain our requirements by pantomimic signs. I must have traversed that ground nearly thirty times since, but the incidents of that first journey are fresher in my mind than those of last year's trip. The thick white cups and saucers; the inevitable and omnipresent, from Petersburg to Paris, "mossoo" smell; the blue-bloused men, the bonnetless women, the shovel-hatted priests, the rope-girdled friars—even now, when first seen again, invariably recall to my mind the little Hôtel de Flandre at Ostend, where I first found myself "abroad."

I look back upon my time at Düsseldorf with the same affectionate regret with which Tennyson's Cleopatra regarded her "life in Egypt," although "the dalliance and the wit, the flattery and the strife," which she apostrophised, were but small factors in my German career. The chief cause of my happiness was that I was, for the first time in my life, my own master, fearing no dominie, unaccountable to any authority; I had cast the schoolboy shackles,

> "and began
> To move about the house with joy,
> And with the certain step of man."

I was only fifteen, it is true; but I was a tall stalwart youth, looking much older, and most of my ways and thoughts were those of a young man of twenty. I was the dear old Professor's only private pupil, and as most of his time was passed at the Gymnasium, and what he called his leisure found him in a gray *Schlafrock*, with a pipe hanging from his mouth, engaged in some very abstruse reading, I had pretty well my time to myself.

At first the Professor made some attempt at giving me regular lessons; but he was compelled to admit the soundness of a theory which I propounded—that, as I had come there to pick up the language, my best chance of accomplishing my end was by going about as much as possible, thrown entirely on my own resources. This suited the Professor perfectly, and thenceforth I had perfect liberty. I soon made innumerable acquaintances

of all kinds, with whom I soon quickly managed to make myself understood; and having a quick ear, I made rapid progress. I avoided the "Plattdeutsch" of the lower classes, I picked up artistic slang among the painters, oaths and free expressions from the officers, and plenty of small-talk from everybody. As I have said, there and then commenced my manhood; from that time, and for five-and-twenty years afterwards, I had no friends who were not considerably my seniors. My time at Düsseldorf was absolutely and entirely my own. I might be absent from meals whenever I chose—and I think Madame Holthausen rather preferred my absence, for economical reasons, for in those days, like Launcelot Gobbo, I was "a huge feeder"—and I carried about with me the key of the street-door, a huge and cumbrous piece of ironmongery.

Düsseldorf was then—what it had been for years, and what it is now perhaps more than ever—renowned as one of the most famous of the Continental art-schools. It was the abode of hundreds of painters of all kinds—real true Bohemians, such as were drawn by Murger and sung by Béranger, poor, jolly, improvident, careless, delightful fellows; the most fascinating company in the world for a lad with youth and health, and the keenest possible appreciation of the delights of existence, then commencing to dawn upon him. I was kindly received and welcomed among them all—by Lessing, one of the finest artists of modern days, our next-door neighbour in the Grüne-Strasse; by Karl Hübner, by Andreas and Oswald Achenbach, now world-renowned, then young fellows with whom I have skated all day and half the night; by Camphausen, the German Landseer; and by fifty others, unkempt, unwashed, never likely to win any renown, very poorly dressed, very warm-hearted, ever ready to share their *viertel* of Varinas tobacco with a friend; ever ready to knock off work, and go round to the nearest *Kneipe* for a grand consummation and many glasses of beer.

After years of Dr. Dyne and "I will now take the fifth form with their Euripides;" after tight-reining and regular hours;

after having to hide behind a hay-stack to smoke a penny cigar, with constant anticipation of being caught and swished, I revelled in my newly-acquired freedom, in my manhood (precocious though it were), and in the knowledge that I had put away childish things. And, even if I would have admitted it, there was no occasion why my conscience should have pricked me; for all this time I was carrying out the object with which I was sent, and acquiring an excellent conversational knowledge of the language. When I first left Düsseldorf, and for some years after, having had only nine months' experience, I doubt whether there were many English people who could speak German with equal felicity of expression and purity of accent. Constantly in Germany I passed for a native; and even now, though years of want of practice have rusted my tongue and dulled my ears, after a week or two in the *Rhein-gegend* my old facility seems in a measure to return. I could write the language, too, fairly, though my style could not have been called strictly commercial, as the demands upon it were in quite another strain; and those demands having long since ceased, the power of correspondence has entirely vanished.

Düsseldorf—which has now, I believe, a considerable English colony—was at that time but little known to our countrymen; but even then there were three or four resident families, from whom I received the greatest kindness. There was Captain Flint—quaintest and most eccentric of half-pay artillerymen, the source of constant wonder, not unmixed with dread, to the simple Germans, who called him "der tolle Englander" (the mad Englishman), and was looked on in open-mouthed astonishment when, with a battered straw hat on his head and a linen jacket on his back, he would carry a chair into the middle of the public Platz, and there sit down and peruse an ancient copy of the *Times;* or stroll along the Castanien Allée, chucking every passing girl under the chin with his shaking hand, leering at her with bloodshot eyes, and grunting his admiration in some unknown tongue—for having only been in the place twenty years he could not, of course, speak the language. He

had a daughter, a bright cheery little woman, who taught English in several families, and more than half supported the household by her exertions; and a son, a kind good fellow—half-Bohemian, half-sportsman, whole idler,—with whom I used to go out wild-duck shooting. There was a charming English family named Lindo—a father and mother, two daughters, and a son Philip, an artist, my great chum, in whose *atelier* I used to spend half my time, and with whom I used to ride in the afternoon—for my indulgent mother allowed me the use of a horse.

Perhaps of them all I was most constantly associated with the family of a retired captain in the navy, an Irish gentleman of good birth, with a hospitable wife, two stalwart sons, and a remarkably pretty and charming daughter-in-law. One of the hearty laughs which memory can even now evoke is in connection with these worthy people. I was to spend the whole of Christmas Day in their company, and we were to have the conventional beef and pudding for dinner—mainly, I believe, out of kindness to me; for the day, I think, is not much of a festival among the Irish of the north. We had all been to service in the Lutheran church, which was occasionally lent to us, listening to the ministrations of a nomadic divine who had pitched his tent among us for a few days, and who ostentatiously exhibited a soup-plate with a napkin, on which lay a thaler and a half as a decoy at the church-door; and when we reached home the house was tightly closed, and no knocking or ringing could procure admission. At length, when the police were about to be sent for, the door was opened by the cook, red-faced and agitated, who announced that thieves had been in the house during our absence, and that everything was stolen. There was nothing very comic in this, especially to a very hungry youth; but the joke lay in the facial and verbal expressions of dear old Mrs. Trotter, who, it must be premised, knew very little German, and to whom the excited servant (doubtless the culprit) addressed herself, with the words, "O madame, madame, ein Dieb ist im Haus gewesen!" (A thief

has been in the house!) "Ah!" said the old lady slowly, and smiling; then, turning to us—"A *Dieb!* And what's a *Dieb?*" When she was told, the explosion was terrific.

There were some half-dozen Americans living at Düsseldorf at that time, among whom I remember a very handsome couple named Woodville, the husband a painter, and father of Mr. R. Caton Woodville, who contributes such spirited sketches to our illustrated journals, and who has made a great mark with more ambitious work; and a strange fellow named Fink, who had lived a long time among the Indians, and who at the Schwimm-Schule on the Rhine—made by railing off a portion of the river—showed us some extraordinary feats in diving and remaining under water.

Shooting—we got large red-legged partridges, hares, and wild-duck in abundance—riding; skating under the pleasantest circumstances, under a bright sun or moon, and on the firmest and most unyielding ice; and lounging and chaffing at the *ateliers* of painter-comrades, I managed to most agreeably while away the day; and at night there were occasionally informal receptions at the houses of English or German friends, and always the *Kneipe*. Come in with me and look at the curious scene—at least, as much of it as you can distinguish through the tobacco-smoke up-curling from every mouth: it is as fresh in my mind as it was in my sight more than five-and-thirty years ago.

A room, long, low, and dingy, with tables running down the centre and sides; wooden settles, and other furniture of the commonest description; undecorated, save by chalk caricatures of the members, some by themselves and by each other, and admirably portraying the peculiarities of all. Listen to the awful noise—the shouting, screeching, joking, blaspheming uproar, that begins with sunset, and with many ends not until drunkenness has taken away the possibility of further altercation. Their fun is mostly of a quiet, decorous, and, truth to tell, somewhat dull and heavy kind, though it sometimes breaks out into ribaldry and riot. The life is quite amusing while you

are leading it, while you are going through the regular routine of it; but when you have left it for a time—when the spell, whatever it may have been, is broken—you look back with astonishment to think you could have ever passed through such a phase of existence. There was a good deal of childish nonsense indulged in among us, and a tendency to practical joking, one example of which still lives in my memory.

We had all been sitting one evening—singing, shouting, chaffing, according to our wont—when the president of the night noticed that one of the company had fallen into a deep and drunken sleep, his head reclining on his arms, which were crossed upon the table. He immediately proposed this as a favourable opportunity for trying the strength of mind on which Eckhardt, the sleeper, so much prided himself. He told us to go on with our different occupations. Some were to talk, some to play dominoes, some billiards; others were to be drinking together. Meanwhile, he would extinguish the lamps; but we were all to continue our amusements as though the room were still lighted, and, if called upon, to declare that such was the case. He then turned out the lamps, and, by a sharp kick, awakened the drunken man. The clamour, the smoke, the shouting, in which this wretched being had closed his eyes, all greeted him on his arrival; one thing alone, the light, was absent; and he commenced to attack us for having left him in the dark.

"What the deuce are you at," he asked, "to be sitting here in the darkness of Hades?"

"Ah, bah!" said the president. "Sleep off thy drunken fits, Franz, and leave us alone. Come, Kraus, there's a cannon!" and a sharp stroke on the billiard-balls rang through the room.

"Bravo!" shouted another of the conspirators. "Point, quinte et quatorze! The game's mine!" and the cards, thrown exultingly into the air, fell with a crash upon the table.

"Stop!" cried the wretched Eckhardt, "one moment, stop! Why have you thus darkened the room?"

"Thou art drunk!" roared another. "'Tis thou art dark,

and not the room. The room is as light as day! Here, Schimmel-Hase, thou hast not the double-six? Then I'm out!" and he rattled the dominoes as he spoke.

"What!" shrieked the victim, in a yell of agony never to be forgotten, "say you the room is lighted, and you are all playing, while I cannot see you? O Almighty God, I am struck blind!"

He fell down in a heap across the table, and it was weeks before he fully recovered.

Meanwhile, though I was, like Mr. Gray's young Eton friends, "unmindful of my doom," with no thought of anything to come, and no care at all, my dear mother was seeing what interest she could exert in order to obtain for me a Government appointment; and finding my father's old friend, the Marquis of Clanricarde, had joined Lord John Russell's recently formed Ministry as Postmaster-General, she ventured on writing to him, reminding him of old Adelphi days, and asking his assistance. Lord Clanricarde replied instantly, speaking in the warmest terms of my father, and of his desire to befriend us. At the immediate moment he could do nothing, but a considerable increase was about to be made to the strength of the Secretary's office, the best in respect of pay and position in the Post Office, and he would certainly not forget my mother's application when the proper time arrived. I am afraid my mother was a little sceptical as to a patron's memory; but Lord Clanricarde was as good as—nay, better than—his word. A few months afterwards he sent for my mother, and asked for more particulars concerning me, my age, education, etc. When he heard I was not yet sixteen, he shook his head, fearing I should be too young for a berth "on the establishment" such as he had purposed for me, but in any case he promised to make me an "extra" clerk. He thought it better I should return home at once, and come with my mother to see him.

So, summoned to return at once, I left Düsseldorf and its delights, and arrived in London, going the next day with my

mother to call on Lord Clanricarde in Carlton House Terrace. I see him now, as at that first interview, a tall, thin, aristocratic man, bald and bland, wearing—novelties in my unaccustomed eyes—tight pantaloons, striped silk socks, and pumps. He received us most kindly, took my hand, saying—as everyone used to say—"How wonderfully like your father!" and, after a little chat, turned to my mother with his pleasant smile, and said, "It will be all right, Mrs. Yates; the boy is so big and strong, no one will guess he is not sixteen, so we'll put him on the establishment at once." Not by very many the only time that my thews and sinews have stood me in good account, but perhaps the most important. A week later I received my appointment as No. 8 in a list of thirteen clerks added to the establishment of the Secretary's office, St. Martin's-le-Grand.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY DAYS IN THE POST OFFICE.

1847—1855.

I ENTERED the Post Office service on the 11th March, 1847, and remained in it exactly twenty-five years. I was not quite sixteen when I received my appointment, and I was nearly forty-one when I resigned it; so that I suppose the best years of my life were passed in the Government employ. Looking at what has happened since, I feel that I might very possibly have employed this time far more profitably. There were several occasions on which, had I chosen to give up the small certainty, I could have obtained valuable literary and journalistic appointments, the holding of which was incompatible with my daily attendance at St. Martin's-le-Grand. The double work was heavy, and not unfrequently harassing. On the other hand, the routine of a public office, in which certain things have necessarily to be done at certain stated times, gave me business habits and appreciation of the necessity of punctuality, which have been of great value to me in my other career.

I am by no means sure that the change in the work, from the dry official records of facts to the light essay or fanciful *feuilleton*, did not enable me to get through more work than if all the hours of labour had been devoted to one kind of subject. And I am quite sure that, though the pay was small, and the work not particularly congenial; though I was generally poor, and always anxious; though my health was not very good, and my cares were perpetually increasing, I extracted as much happiness out of my position as was possible—more, probably,

than I could have found in most other stations in life, where the responsibility would have been greater. I grumbled at my lot, as we all do; but I know that I never returned from my annual holiday without a half-pleasurable sensation at being back. My animal spirits were excellent. I was, I am pleased to think, very popular with most of my comrades; and the authorities, if not entirely in sympathy with some of my eccentricities, were, on the whole, indulgent, and inclined not to see anything that was not specially brought under their notice. In my earliest official days I formed one or two intimate friendships, which exist to the present hour, having never known a shadow. And generally in the course of every two or three months I find my way to St. Martin's—not, however, to the building in which my time was passed; that has been given up entirely to those engaged in letter-sorting, etc.—and have a chat with old colleagues over old times.

A superstitious person might possibly have thought it an unfavourable omen for my future career that the pole of the omnibus on which I journeyed into the City broke as we were descending what in those days was a very steep hill between Hatton Garden and Farringdon Street, and that we nearly were upset; but one is not superstitious at sixteen, and I was only a little nervous when I presented myself at the lobby of the Secretary's office. My godfather, Edmund Byng, had mentioned my appointment to two young fellows of his acquaintance who were in the office, and they speedily introduced themselves to me and set me at my ease. There was no examination in those days; I had not even to write from dictation, or do a rule-of-three sum, as had Anthony Trollope thirteen years before.

After a few days' probation in the Registry, where the receipt and disposal of the various communications addressed to the department were recorded in huge ledgers, I was placed in the money-order department of the Secretary's office—*i.e.* where the correspondence relating to money-orders with the public and the postmasters was carried on; and there I remained

about two years. Two years of almost unalloyed official happiness! We were about twelve or fifteen clerks altogether, dispersed in three or four rooms. Our principal was a bald-headed middle-aged man, given to taking snuff and imbibing a cheap Marsala—a man full of strange oaths without any modern instances, but of a kindly nature, and disposed to make allowance for youth. There were three or four fellows not much older than myself, and we were always telling the most ridiculous stories and playing the wildest pranks. Our room had a door of communication with that of the Chief Clerk, an old gentleman who had the reputation of being a little thick and cloudy after luncheon. One day some of the fellows, while larking, upset a huge screen, which fell with a resounding bang. I had had nothing to do with it, but was advancing to pick up the screen, when the Chief Clerk entered, flushed with lunch and rage. "What the devil's this row?" he called out; then, seeing me—he had scarcely ever noticed me before—he graciously said, "Oh, it's you, is it, sir? Please recollect you're not now on the boards of the Adelphi!" Again the old reproach of the schooldays cropping up! It seemed as if it were never to be got rid of!

I am sure, from all I hear, that the young gentlemen by whom the Secretary's office is now junior-officered, and who are mostly, I believe, graduates of the Universities or scions of the aristocracy, would scarcely believe the details of the audacious fun which used to be perpetrated by their predecessors just before the year 1850, so I will relate one or two special instances.

My great chum in those days was a man about ten years older than myself, whom, for distinction's sake, I will call Pitt, and who was the most audacious practical joker I have ever met. He had the most charming manners and the most perfect *sang-froid*; nothing ever upset his balance, and he could perpetrate the most daring hoax without altering a muscle of his face. Two of his exploits I remember well. At the corner of one of the streets running from the Strand to the river, near

St. Mary's Church, was a well-known Italian warehouse. One day, as Pitt and I were walking westward after office-hours, we saw hanging at the shop-door a bundle of bananas, with an inscription, "The last bananas we shall receive this season." Pitt stopped and read the placard. "That is very curious," he said, "and must be inquired into!" I followed him up the shop, a long low addition to the original house, until we reached the counter at the far end, where two or three shopmen were busy serving customers. "Could I speak to Mr. ——?" asked Pitt, mentioning the name he had read on the shop-door, and speaking with the greatest earnestness. "He's in, sir, but he's having his tea; but if you particularly want him, I'll call him." "Thank you, I *do* want a word with him." The proprietor came out of his parlour, wiping his mouth, and, rounding the counter, was immediately laid hold of by Pitt, who took him by the elbow and led him, astonished, to the door. Arrived there, Pitt pointed to the bananas. "Are these positively the very last bananas that you will receive this season?" "Yes," said the man, "they are. What of it?" "Is there no probability, then, of your having another batch?" "No—not that I know of. What of it?" said the man, with a dawning suspicion of being hoaxed, but still impressed by Pitt's excellent manner. "What of it? Well, *I* think it a most interesting circumstance! Deeply obliged to you. Good-morning!" And he took off his hat with an air, and left the man, purple and speechless, on his own threshold.

Another of his practical jokes was even more audacious. Middle-aged readers will possibly remember that the original shop for Holloway's patent medicines was at the extremity of the Strand, a few doors west of Temple Bar. It was a long shop, with a narrow counter running the length of it, at which sat a number of men, occupied in rolling the pills, spreading the ointment, etc. Pitt had often told me he felt curiously attracted to that shop; and one day, as we were passing, he said, "Can you keep grave for five minutes?" I told him I thought I could, little guessing to what test my gravity was to

be subjected. "Then come along!" And the next minute he sprang from my side into the shop, where, in the open space before the counter, he began leaping about and throwing up his legs with an agility which, in those præ-Vokes days, was unknown. The shopmen stared in wonder, and one of them was advancing, when Pitt bounded in front of him, and asked, "You don't know me? you don't recognise me?" The shopman, evidently taking him for a lunatic, was muttering something about not having the pleasure, when Pitt, pointing to the others, asked, "Do none of those recognise me?" A general chorus of "No!" "I don't wonder at it!" said Pitt. "When I was last in this shop, I was carried in on the cabman's back —couldn't walk a step—bad legs of forty years' standing! But now, thanks to your invaluable pills and ointment—look here! and here!" Once more he bounded and danced up and down the shop—and then we ran for our lives.

It was my prominent share in the perpetration of these jokes that first procured me the honour of an interview with Mr.—afterwards Sir Rowland—Hill, who was most kind and friendly with me so long as he lived. Our first meeting, however, scarcely boded well for the future. There had been a tremendous row, not unconnected with the peppering, with peas and pellets of saturated blotting-paper, of the passers-by in Foster Lane, a thoroughfare on which our windows looked; and I, who had been caught by one of the authorities in the very act, had been "reported."

Rowland Hill was then in a transition state: he had carried out his penny-postage scheme, and received some of his rewards; but he had many bitter, powerful, and unscrupulous enemies, who had succeeded in having him removed from a berth at the Treasury, to which he had been appointed, on the plea that his services were no longer required. There had, however, been a loud expression of public feeling; Mr. Hill had been presented with a testimonial, raised by public subscription, and amounting to nearly fourteen thousand pounds; and in the year before I joined the service he had been pitch-

forked into the department in a somewhat anomalous position. He was not made Secretary of the Post Office—that important berth had been for years held by Colonel Maberly; Mr. Hill was called Secretary to the Postmaster-General, a ridiculous title for a sham and non-existent position. The Post Office had its Secretary, the Postmaster-General had his private secretary, and no other was required. But it was necessary to find a berth at St. Martin's-le-Grand for Mr. Hill, and he did not of course care what it was called, provided he got recognised status and sufficient salary. His duties were arranged, so far as possible, not to clash with Colonel Maberly, who was exceedingly jealous of the new arrival, and hated "the man from Birmingham," as he always called him, with a holy hatred. Mr. Hill, with two or three clerks, prepared statistical returns, suggested economies, and also had the supervision of that secretarial money-order department in which I worked. So that when, one morning, I was told "Mr. 'Ill" wished to speak to me, I felt as I had not felt since Dr. Dyne's invitation to his sanctum at Highgate School.

I found him seated at his desk, a middle-aged man of medium height and slight build, bald-headed, with deep-set grey eyes, wearing spectacles, and with a grave, but not unkind, expression. After exchanging bows, he commenced by saying that my name had been mentioned to him by his old friend Charles Manby, who was, he believed, my guardian. I admitted the fact, and began to think I was getting on pretty well, not having been summarily dismissed, as I had half anticipated. "I have been making some inquiries about you, Mr. Yates," he continued, "and I find you're very popular, and have plenty of energy and ability, and can do very good work if you choose, but that you suffer under a superfluity of animal spirits." He stopped, and looked at me keenly through his glasses, while I muttered something about "not being aware of it." "So I'm told," he said, "and I'm going to ask you one or two questions. Where do you live?" "With my mother, sir, in St. John's Wood—the Alpha Road." "Ah," said he, "a

very nice part, though a little too far away. Now, how do you come down to the Office?" "Generally on the top of the omnibus, sir." "Ah, I thought so. Now, if in future you would *walk* down to the Office, Mr. Yates, I think you'll find it would bring those animal spirits to a proper level." And I bowed myself out, too delighted at having escaped so easily.

I am afraid that I never followed my chief's well-meant advice, but to the end of my career persisted in riding down to the Office. In later days, and in the summer, I would come on horseback through the parks, and, putting up my horse in Westminster, would go on into the City by boat. These, however, were my omnibus days. On the morning journey the vehicle was completely filled by "regulars," *i.e.* passengers who invariably occupied the same seat, which they retained by a weekly payment. My place was next the driver, Jack Harris, a wonderfully humorous fellow, whose queer views of the world and real native wit afforded me the greatest amusement. A dozen of the best omnibus sketches in *Punch* were founded on scenes which had occurred with this fellow, and which I described to John Leech, whose usually grave face would light up as he listened, and who would reproduce them with inimitable fun.

I only had one other interview with Mr. Hill in those early days, though in later official life I was constantly in personal communication with him. It was the custom in those days—which were, I suppose, before the invention of copying-machines—to copy into various enormous books every official document, whether minute to the Postmaster-General, instructions to the officers of the staff, or letter, and even simple acknowledgment of receipt of their communication to the public. The duty devolved on the juniors, who took it in turn to remain after the close of the official hours, ten till four, and discharge it. One day, I not merely copied a letter which had been written at Mr. Hill's instance, but, having rather an imitative pen, I succeeded in producing a very fair copy of his signature at its close. Some time after, I was again summoned

into his presence. "Is that your copying?" asked Mr. Hill, pointing to the letter. I acknowledged it. "And is that also your work?" with his finger on the signature. With cheeks aflame I bowed in acquiescence. "It's very clever," he said, "very clever indeed; but don't you think," he added quite quietly,—"don't you think, Mr. Yates, *it's rather a dangerous accomplishment?*" He emphasised his words with a keen glance through his spectacles, and I have never copied a signature since.

At the end of two years I was transferred to another branch of the Secretary's office, and placed under the care of John Strange Baker, to whom I owe my business training, my love for English literature, and many of the happiest hours of my life. It was a critical period with me just then; for though during my schooldays I had imbibed a taste for reading in a small way, the fact of becoming my own master, and the introduction to the grosser pleasures of London life, had almost extinguished it, and I was degenerating into rather a rowdy *farceur*, a senseless, sensuous, funny-story-telling, practical-joke-playing kind of cub, when I was rescued by my official apprenticeship to John Baker.

I knew my Byron, and Moore, and Scott tolerably well, but very little of Wordsworth, and had never heard the name of Tennyson. With my new friend I made acquaintance with Macaulay as a prose-writer ("The Lays of Ancient Rome" had been favourite spouting-pieces at Highgate), and after the Essays went through the *History of England*, then just in course of publication. Goldsmith, Boswell, Lamb, De Quincey, Coleridge, and Hazlitt are all associated in my mind with those days, whence also I date my first real appreciation of the worth of Shakespeare, though I had lived in a world of Shakespearean appreciation and quotation from my childhood. My friend, who happily still survives as one of the principals at St. Martin's-le-Grand, was an admirable master of official style, and had the power of marshalling his facts and expressing himself in concise sentences, which must have been specially grateful to our chief, Colonel Maberly, who abhorred what he

called "slip-slop." Gifted with a large stock of patience and toleration; gentle, kindly, full of fun himself, and with a keen appreciation of humour; an excellent official guide and a charming private friend, he was essentially a man to obtain influence over a youth of my earnest eager temperament, an influence which was always wholesomely and beneficially exercised.

Of very different calibre in mind and body and brain was another companion of those days, James Kenney, the eldest son of Kenney the dramatist—a strange weird little man, with bright eyes and shaven cheeks and stubbly black hair, looking something between an actor and an abbé. There was, however, considerably more of the actor than the abbé about him. He had lived much in France, his mother was a Frenchwoman, and he spoke with a strong foreign accent, in which he would give forth the funniest stories, the quaintest sayings, which for a long time impressed us deeply with his talent and wit, until we discovered that stories, sayings, the very tones in which they were narrated and the gestures with which he embellished them, were borrowed bodily from his younger brother, Charles Lamb Kenney, who achieved some distinction with his pen, and as an oral wit was amongst the first flight. James posed as a scientific and mechanical genius, and always carried about with him a black bag in which he had portions of a brass machine, which he would take out during the pauses of the official work and commence to scrape, hammer, and file at, sending us into paroxysms of teeth-on-edge discomfort. He had an actual substratum of cleverness, but it was wholly unavailable in a public office, and his life was frittered away without his making any mark.

In my new position I saw, for the first time, the virtual head of my office, the Secretary, Colonel Maberly,* and was fre-

*. The Postmaster-General is, of course, the real head of the Post Office, but to most of the clerks he is a veiled Mokanna; besides, Postmaster-Generals "come and go" with Ministers, while the Secretary, until death or resignation releases him, "goes on for ever."

quently brought into communication with him so long as he remained with us. I cannot understand how Anthony Trollope, as he relates in his *Autobiography*, found Colonel Maberly cruel and unjust; he may have had a personal dislike to Trollope, whose manner, I fear, was not conciliating; but though he was always pleasant to me after a fashion, his chief characteristic was, I think, indifference. He liked his status at the Post Office, he liked the salary which it gave him, he was fond of money, and he went through the work; but he was an Irish landlord—a very different position then from what it is now; and his mind was running on whether Tim Mooney would pay his rent, or Mick Reilly the bailiff would get a good price for the heifer. He was married to a beautiful and brilliant lady, who wrote fashionable novels and went into society, so he had much besides the Post Office to occupy his thoughts.

He used to arrive about eleven o'clock, and announce his arrival by tearing at the bell for his breakfast. This bell brought the head messenger, whose services he arrogated to himself, who, being a venerable-looking and eminently respectable personage, probably well-to-do in the world, was disgusted at having to kneel at the Colonel's feet, and receive the Colonel's dirty boots into his arms with the short adjuration, "Now, Francis, my straps!" He wrote a most extraordinary illegible hand, and perhaps for that reason scarcely any holograph beyond his signature is to be found in the official records. The custom was for certain clerks of recognised status, who had a distinct portion of the official work in their charge, to submit the reports which had been received from the postmasters or district surveyors, on complaints or suggestions of the public, to the Secretary, and receive his instructions as to the course to be pursued, or the style of reply to be sent. This performance we used to call "taking in papers to the Colonel," and a very curious performance it was.

The Colonel, a big, heavy-built, elderly man, would sit in a big chair, with his handkerchief over his knees and two or three private letters before him. Into a closely-neighbouring seat the

clerk would drop, placing his array of official documents on the table. Greetings exchanged, the Colonel, reading his private letters, would dig his elbow into the clerk's ribs, saying, "Well, my good fellow, what have you got there—very important papers, eh?" "I don't know, sir; some of them are, perhaps——" "Yes, yes, my good fellow; no doubt *you* think they're very important: *I* call them damned twopenny-ha'penny! Now, read, my good fellow, read!" Thus adjured, the clerk would commence reading aloud one of his documents. The Colonel, still half engaged with his private correspondence, would hear enough to make him keep up a running commentary of disparaging grunts, "Pooh! stuff! upon my soul!" etc. Then the clerk, having come to the end of the manuscript, would stop, waiting for orders; and there would ensue a dead silence, broken by the Colonel, who, having finished his private letters, would look up and say, "Well, my good fellow, well?" "That's all, sir." "And quite enough too. Go on to the next!" "But what shall I say to this applicant, sir?" "Say to him? Tell him to go and be damned, my good fellow!" and on our own reading of those instructions we had very frequently to act.

With all this, Colonel Maberly was a clear-headed man of business; old-fashioned, inclined to let matters run in their ordinary groove, detesting all projects of reform, and having an abiding horror of Rowland Hill. As I have said, he was with me generally easily good-natured, but he could assume an air of *hauteur* and be uncommonly unpleasant sometimes; and I remember that when on a little slip of written memoranda which used to be kept on the edge of his green slope-desk we saw the words, "Kate—money," we might generally expect to find the Colonel's temper rather short that morning.

Amongst those clerks who were not brought much into communication with him he was supposed to be very high and haughty, and in connection with this *trait* there was a good story told of him shortly after I joined the service. It appears that one of Lord Clanricarde's recent appointments, a strapping Irish lad fresh from Galway, wished to effect an exchange of

duties with a brother clerk named Williams, whose exact whereabouts he did not know. He roamed through the unfamiliar passages until he met a young fellow, of whom he inquired where Williams was to be found. The young fellow was a practical humourist, and, at once comprehending the situation, pointed to the door of the Secretary's room and disappeared. In went the neophyte without an instant's hesitation, and found the Colonel writing at his desk. "Is it Williams ye are?" asked the Galwegian. "Eh?" cried the astonished Colonel, raising his head. "Are ye Williams, and will ye take me waithin' duty——" But here the outraged Colonel flung down his pen, and, waving off the intruder with both arms, called in a hollow voice, "Go away, man!"*

The Postmaster-Generalship being one of those berths which are vacated on a change of Ministry, my kind friend Lord Clanricarde did not remain very long in office. While at the head of affairs, he took several opportunities of showing that he had not forgotten me. He had me sent out to assist one of the district surveyors in his travels of inspection round the country offices, a duty which, as it provided "per diem" and travelling allowances in addition to the salary, and gave one the chance of becoming acquainted with much of the internal working of the department, was, in every way, a really good thing for a young man. I am afraid, however, that, just launching, as I was, into the pleasures of London life, I scarcely appreciated his kindness as I ought; and I know that when, later on, I was occasionally sent out to "take charge" of a country post-office —*i.e.* to represent the postmaster, who, through some dereliction of duty, had been temporarily suspended from exercising his functions—I used to groan in spirit at my exile from all I loved, though, of course, I could make no open demonstration. The ghastly days and nights I have passed in such places as Stony Stratford and Sittingbourne, with a dull mechanical duty to perform, and without a congenial soul with whom to exchange an idea, are still present to my memory.

* Colonel Maberly died in January, 1885, in his eighty-seventh year.

A year after I first entered the service, I was sent to Winchfield, a desolate railway-station on the S.W.R., near Basingstoke, where it had been decided to open a post-office for the convenience of the Speaker, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, who lived in the neighbourhood, and other local magnates. I was selected to instruct in his duties the young man who had been appointed postmaster; and, while I was inculcating the very small amount of official lore which I myself possessed, the news came of the intended Chartist demonstration on the 10th of April, 1848. I was not going to be left out of such a chance of excitement; so I rushed up to London for a couple of days, got myself sworn in as a special constable for Marylebone, mustered with my division at what used to be Captain Hall's riding-school, at the top of Albany Street, and then turned out to enjoy the fun of the streets on my own account.

Lord Clanricarde's kindness continued while he lived, though we only met occasionally; he always wrote to me when anything special in regard to me had occurred; and on my quitting the service in 1872, I thought it right to acquaint him with the fact, and at the same time to thank him for his early kindness. His reply was in the most genial spirit. "I assure you," he wrote, "I feel very sensibly your kind recollection. It must enhance the pleasure I have often felt and feel in observing your distinguished and well-deserved success in literature, gained while you did not fail to earn official credit likewise. That I have been at any time able to serve you, and to gratify your excellent and admirable mother, will always be to me a happy reminiscence."

After the retirement of Lord Clanricarde, the holders of the Postmaster-Generalship, in my time, were Lords Colchester, Elgin, and Canning; the Duke of Argyll; Lords Hardwicke and Stanley of Alderley; the Duke of Montrose; and the Marquis of Hartington. Save in some special instances, the general body of the clerks knew little about their Great Panjandrum. On his accession to office, he used to be "brought round"; that is to say, Colonel Maberly would open

the door of each room, and say, "Gentlemen, the Postmaster-General!" then, turning to his lordship, "This is the such-and-such branch;" and we would rise and bow, and our new master would return the salutation and depart.

This was the usual style of performance; but I remember two exceptional cases, in both of which the late Lord Hardwicke was concerned. He was a blunt, eccentric, mannerless person, with an overweening sense of the importance of his position; he had previously served in the navy, which fact, coupled with the peculiarity of his ways, caused him to be known among us as "the Bo'sun." His first genial inquiry on his appointment, when the "list of officers of the department" was submitted to him, was, "Now, can I dismiss all these men?" And his general idea was that late attendance, or any other shortcoming on the part of the clerks, should be punished by keel-hauling or the "cat." On the occasion of his being "brought round," it happened that a couple of dozen of Guinness's bottled stout—a pleasant beverage, which at that time I was sufficiently young and strong to take with my luncheon—had arrived for my consumption, and had been temporarily stowed away in a corner of the room. As the Bo'sun was about retiring the bottles caught his eye. "Hullo!" he roared, in a Jack Bunsby-like voice; "whose are those?" I meekly acknowledged the proprietorship. I do not know what punishment Lord Hardwicke would have decreed me for the inexpiable offence of drinking beer, for Colonel Maberly hurried him away. In the next room they were not so fortunate. There one of the men was so absorbed in his *Times* that he had not heard the entrance of the Secretary and the new chief, but, with his back to the door, sat immersed in his reading. The wily Bo'sun marked this at once, and, stealing up behind the preoccupied man, gave him a dig in the ribs, exclaiming, "Hullo, you sir, if you can find time to read the newspaper, we can spare a clerk!"

With only one other of the Postmasters-General—Lord Stanley of Alderley—was I ever brought into contact, though

towards the close of my official career I was treated with kindness and consideration by Lord Hartington, at a time when I required both. I had not, nor have I, any personal acquaintance with Lord Hartington, but I desire to place on record my appreciation of his friendliness. Lord Hartington has, I believe, a character for *hauteur* and want of sympathy; but his interest in the service and his impartiality won him great respect in the Post-Office; whereas his predecessor, Lord Stanley of Alderley, known as a *bon-vivant* and a joker, "old Ben Stanley" among his friends, was heartily detested by most of the officials whose ill-luck it was to have to see him. That he was cross-grained and tyrannical, and stingy to the letter-carriers and messengers, I knew from his treatment of official matters; that he was insolent and overbearing to his subordinates I had heard, but little thought I should ever have any personal experience of the fact.

One day, however, I was sent for by Sir Rowland Hill. I was at that time the head of the Missing Letter branch, and as such it had devolved on me to carry out a pet scheme of Sir Rowland's—the reduction of the fee for registering letters from sixpence to fourpence, by which it was hoped that, as the opportunities for obtaining almost certain security were made cheaper, the chance enclosure of coins and valuables would be proportionately diminished. The measure had taken many months' close attention to elaborate, but at last it had been worked out in every detail, had received the sanction of the Treasury, and only required the Postmaster-General's signature to a certain deed to become law. This deed had been prepared and forwarded to Lord Stanley, and we were awaiting its return. Obeying his summons, I found my chief rather anxious.

"I am afraid I have rather a disagreeable job for you, Yates!" was his salutation.

"Indeed, sir?"

"Ye—es. In connection with the registration-fee. The papers are with the Postmaster-General, are they not? I've

just been told by the solicitor, Mr. Ashurst, that it is absolutely necessary his lordship's signature should be attached to the warrant before twelve o'clock to-night, or the whole thing will lapse as informal, and all our trouble will be lost. It will be necessary, therefore, that some one should see his lordship at once, explain the matter to him, and get his signature. Now you are the only person in the office who understands all about the question, and therefore you must go."

"Very well, sir. Can you tell me where I am likely to find Lord Stanley?"

"Yes; that's just the point. I understand that Lord Stanley is at Newmarket Races, with—with rather a fast party of friends. You'll have to go to him there."

This was horrible. To have to drag an irritable elderly nobleman away from his fun—bother him about business!

"Dear me, sir," I said, "that is a disagreeable job, indeed!"

"Yes," he said; adding instantly, in his peculiar hard manner, "but you'll have to do it. I don't exactly remember the name of the house or hotel where Lord Stanley is staying, but you'll get that from his confidential butler in Dover Street. So be off as quickly as you can, and be sure to get the signature before midnight. Here is a letter of introduction for you to present to Lord Stanley, in which I have told him who you are. 'Good-day!"

Sir Rowland nodded me my dismissal, and, though I detested the mission, there was nothing for me to do but to go. I drove off in a cab to Dover Street, was admitted by a footman, saw the confidential butler, and learned from him that Lord Stanley had just arrived from Newmarket, and was at that moment actually in the library. I gave the man Sir Rowland's letter of introduction, and in a few moments was bidden to follow him.

I can see that room and the scene which occurred perfectly plainly, at the present moment. Standing on the hearthrug, with his back to the fireplace, and facing me as I entered, was a thickset elderly man of middle height. On the table close by him was a yellow-paper-covered French novel which he had

evidently just thrown down, and on a further table were three or four of the heavy leather pouches in which official documents were forwarded to the Postmaster-General.

As the butler closed the door behind me, I made the gentleman a bow, of which he took not the smallest notice. He did not offer me a seat, so I remained standing, *planté-là*.

"What do you want?" was his gracious query.

"I have come about the reduction of the registration-fee, my lord. I thought Sir Rowland Hill had explained in his letter. It is necessary that your lordship's signature——"

"Yes, yes, I know all about that," he interrupted. "I have signed the damned thing!" going to one of the official pouches, and rummaging in it. "It's here somewhere—no, that's not it. I can't find it; but I know I've signed it. Look here, have you got a cab outside?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Then," pointing to them, "just take these pouches back to the Office; you'll find it when you get there."

It was just too much. I am of a hot temper, and I boiled over.

"What!" I cried, in a tone that made my friend jump again. "What! do you expect me to carry those bags to the cab? If you want that done, ring the bell and tell your servant to do it. I'm not your servant, and I won't carry bags for you or any man in London!"

He looked petrified; but he rang the bell.

"What's your name, sir?" he asked.

"My name is Yates, my lord," I replied.

"I don't like your manner, sir," said he.

"And I don't like yours, my lord," I rattled out. "I came here, properly introduced by the Secretary; I made you a salutation, which you had not the politeness to return; you have never asked me to take a seat——"

"Wasn't I standing myself?" he interpolated.

"That is no affair of mine. Your business as a gentleman was to ask me to be seated. And now you think I am going to do your servant's work!"

Here the servant entered the room, and was ordered by his master to carry off the bags. I was preparing to follow him, when Lord Stanley said,

"You shall hear more of this, sir!"

"Whenever you please, my lord; I shall be quite ready!" and off I went.

I was desperately upset, and I suppose I showed it; for when I arrived at the Office I made straight for Sir Rowland's room. His face, on seeing me, expressed more astonishment and concern than I had ever seen there.

"What, back so soon!" he said. "Why, what's the matter with you, my good fellow? You're trembling, and—tell me, what has happened?"

I told him shortly. The old gentleman was greatly excited, and very sympathetic. He rose from his seat, and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"I'm very sorry you've been exposed to this, Yates," he said; "but you mustn't mind. He's a damned rude fellow; he's been very rude to *me* before now. Don't you be afraid of his threats; I'll take care of that. And he will think better of what he said when he's a little cooler. Depend upon it, you'll hear no more of it."

I did not hear any more of it in the way I anticipated. But the story got wind, and another one was speedily improvised to the effect that Lord Stanley had been so frightened by my display of independence that the next time one of the messengers was sent to him with some official papers, he rushed at the astonished man, seized him warmly by the hand, and insisted on his stopping to luncheon.

To my being able to converse in French and German I owed, during my life in the Post Office, several delightful special trips—one to Hamburg, to ascertain how quickly the mails could be conveyed thither by a certain route; one to Brindisi, when, in consequence of the outbreak of the Franco-German War, and the consequent danger of continuing our

Indian mail service from Marseilles, I had the honour of pioneering the route over the Brenner, and thence to Brindisi, which was followed until the completion of the Mont Cenis tunnel. My first special journey, however—first and most important—was merely due to my position in the Secretary's office. It was in the year 1858, and the terrible Indian Mutiny was at its height. Submarine telegraphy was in its infancy then, and the number of letters passing between this country and India was so enormously increased that supplementary mails were continually being despatched. The ordinary Indian mail, made up in air-tight cases, was always sent in charge of special officers appointed for the purpose, and discharging no other duty than that of travelling, with the mails in their custody, from London to Marseilles, and from Marseilles, on board one of the steamers of the P. and O. Company, to Alexandria, where the charge was transferred to the officers of the Indian Post Office, who had travelled so far, bringing the homeward letters. No mails were despatched without an officer in charge; so during the Mutiny the supplementary mails were sent in care of some of us junior clerks of the Secretary's office, who were delighted to get the chance of the change.

As soon as I heard when my turn was likely to come, I wrote to Anthony Trollope—who had been sent out to Egypt on a special mission from the General Post Office—telling him I was coming, and asking him to look out for me. I started from the London Bridge Station of the South-Eastern Railway (there was no Charing Cross Station in those days) one wild night in the beginning of March, 1858, with seventy-six boxes or cases of letters in my care. These boxes were counted at Dover, counted on board the boat, counted again on landing at Calais—I in a mortal fright on each occasion—and counted at the *gare* of Calais, where they were deposited in a huge *fourgon*, one end of which was fitted up like a little room, with shelves, a lamp, and two huge *fauteuils*—one for me, M. le Courrier Anglais (for such designation I at once received), and

the other for my *confrère*, M. le Courrier Français, by whom I was joined; such a pleasant fellow, I remember, and such a *raconteur!* As we started he put himself bodily—legs, feet, and all—into an enormous bag lined with sheepskin, which he looped round his neck, lit a pipe, flung himself on the *fauteuil*, and began to talk.

I can still smell the *saucisson de Lyon* and the *fromage de Brie*, still taste the sound red wine, which his wife brought him at the *Gare du Nord* in Paris, just before we rattled over the stones with our boxes to the Marseilles railway, and which he generously shared with me; thereby, I verily believe, saving my life, as I was famished, and we had not an instant allowed us to get out and procure food. The weather was bitterly cold throughout the journey; and when we arrived at Marseilles the people were thronging the streets, looking at the thickly-falling snow, a sight which had not been seen for years. I bade adieu to my travelling companion, and got my boxes safely on board the P. and O. steamer *Euxine*, commanded by one of the best and noblest fellows that ever breathed, Captain Thomas Black, with whom I then and there commenced an intimate friendship, which lasted for twenty years, and was only terminated by his death in 1879.

That delightful trip will always remain vividly impressed on my memory, for in it not merely did I see scenes and places which I had longed to visit, but I enjoyed, for the first time for several years, a sense of perfect rest and repose, a freedom from the receipt of letters and calls upon my time. I can perfectly call to mind at the present moment the keen sense of enjoyment in lying outstretched on the deck in the lovely weather, my first realization of Tennyson's "blue unclouded," with the knowledge that there was no need to hurry to the Office, no accursed "attendance-book" to sign, no theatre to visit, no subsequent criticism to write. We had twelve hours for coaling at Malta, which I spent with a former colleague, the Postmaster-General of the island, through whom I had the honour of an introduction to Admiral Lord Lyons, father of the present

diplomatist, who was then in command of the Mediterranean Squadron, and whose personal appearance struck me as so remarkably resembling the pictures of Nelson, whom he so worthily emulated; and, after a further delightful voyage of three days, arrived at Alexandria, where I made over my troublesome charge of mail-boxes to the agent, and found I had two or three days at my disposal before the homeward mails were likely to arrive.

I had expected to find Anthony Trollope here, but the following characteristic letter was handed to me:

"Alexandria, 11 March 1858.

My dear Yates,—It is matter of great regret to me that I should miss you. But were I to stay now I should lose my only opportunity of going to Jerusalem. I had hoped to have got there and back before you came out, and it has been impossible for me to start till to-day. I shall probably still see you on 22nd. At Cairo see (above all) the newly-opened catacombs of Sakhara—by taking a horse and mounted guide you may see that and the Pyramids of Ghizeh in one day. Hear the howling dervishes of Cairo at one on Friday. They howl but once a week. Go to the citadel of Cairo, and mosque of Sultan Hassan. See, also, the tombs of the Caliphs. Heliopolis is a humbug, so also is the petrified forest. At Alexandria see the new Greek church they have just excavated. Go to the Oriental Hotel at Alexandria, and Shepherd's at Cairo. —Yours ever, ANTHONY TROLLOPE."

The mail-agent warned me that my time in the East was likely to be very short; so, on his advice, after a cursory glance at Alexandria, I hurried off by rail to Cairo. The journey, which, I see, is now performed in five or six hours, then took the whole day; and we were even an extra time in getting through it, as in those days, there being only one line of rails, our train was shunted at Tantah to enable a train containing the Pasha's troops to pass by.

But the time there employed was not wasted; for a fair was going on at Tantah, in which I found a strange epitome of Egyptian life, even to the incident of the Bedouin bringing in

his horse for sale, as related in Mrs. Norton's charming verse. The Bedouin in this instance, however, seemed to be a remarkably 'cute customer, not unversed in the mysteries of "coping" and "chaunting," and with altogether more of the London mews than of the Libyan desert about him. There was a Punch, too, and a buffoon who danced, and another who told stories, and was surrounded by a rapt and eager audience, quite a reminiscence of the *Arabian Nights*. At Tantah, too, I saw a band of convicts, horrible-looking ruffians, many of them grievously afflicted with ophthalmia, handcuffed and leg-ironed, and linked together by a long chain passing over their shoulders. They growled and cursed freely as they passed us; but the guards in charge prodded them pleasantly with their muskets, and drove them on. There, too, did we find drawn up on the siding three large green saloon-carriages, in which were, we were told, some members of the Pasha's harem. Up and down in front of these vehicles paced some very hideous black slaves —*Arabian Nights* again!—who scowled on anyone daring to approach, and motioned the would-be intruders away. But a fellow-passenger and I stole to the back of the carriages, while the Pasha's troop-train was passing in front, and the guardians' attention was thus engaged, and were rewarded for our temerity by a momentary glimpse of a pair of lustrous eyes and a white yashmak.

It was night when we reached Cairo; the station was a long way from the town; and I made a triumphal entry on a donkey, followed by its driver, and preceded by a boy with a torch, both boys yelling at the top of their voices. I was deposited at the door of Shepherd's Hotel, where my arrival was sufficiently ignominious; for the sudden cessation of the donkey's gallop sent me flying over his head, to the great delight of several of John Company's officers, military and civil, who were congregated in the veranda. Shepherd's was full — I am told it always is, even in its present enlarged and improved form—it was crammed that night, and I was about to be turned away. But on my making an emphatic representation to Mr. Shepherd,

and mentioning the name of Albert Smith, who had done the hotel good service in his "Month at Constantinople," I was told I might, if I chose, take possession of a large sofa, which stood in a corner of the coffee-room. I was too thankful even for this accommodation; and after a meal I laid myself down without undressing. The room was quite dark, and I had not been long asleep when a man, whom I made out to be a French waiter, and who was rather drunk, plumped himself down by my side. Him I kicked into the middle of the room, and heard no more of; but I was again awakened later by a fresh visitor, in the shape of a huge dog, who had evidently been accustomed to pass the night there, and with whom I shared my couch.

When I woke I found the homeward-bound mails had been telegraphed as having left Suez, so that my visit to Cairo was considerably abbreviated. Of the Pyramids I may say, *vidi tantum:* I actually saw them in the distance from the top of the citadel, and that was all. I rejoined the old *Euxine* at Alexandria, made my return journey across France much as I had come, and was home in London within three weeks of having quitted it, which in those days was considered good travelling. A couple of articles descriptive of my journey, under the title "In Charge," appeared in one of the early numbers of *All the Year Round.*

My other official trips had no incidents particularly worthy of record, though in connection with my run to Hamburg and back occurred one of those amenities of official life which it is as well to preserve. The journey, which was undertaken at the express desire of Mr. Frederick Hill, the Assistant Secretary, was made in the month of January, in exceptionally severe and trying weather, the Elbe being frozen over; my instructions being to prove in how little time the out-and-home journey could be accomplished. I took but a very few hours' rest before starting on my return. The consequence was that on my arrival at home I was completely knocked up. I had signs of erysipelas on my forehead, desperate pains and numb-

ness in my head, and a thorough all-overish sense of illness. I got to bed at once, and sent for my old friend Mr. Skey, of Bartholomew's, who pronounced me suffering under a complete chill, with serious complications in the future, unless I succumbed at once.

I was anxious to make my report, and to give personal explanation of the results of my journey; but the doctor insisted on my remaining in bed, and wrote a certificate of my state, which I forwarded to the Office, asking for indulgence for two or three days. I do not know whether the certificate was couched in professional, and consequently apparently pompous, terms, which grated upon the simple susceptibilities of the Secretary, Mr. Tilley; whether he was annoyed at my having been employed by one of the Hills, with whom he was always at variance; or whether it was the natural benevolence and geniality of the man, which caused him to send me the following reply to my application:

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I have to inform you that, *as it appears you have a headache*, leave of absence for two days has been granted you.—Your obedient servant,

JOHN TILLEY."

This was my return for having faithfully performed a service which did not lie within my ordinary duty, and in the discharge of which I had been nearly frozen to death and narrowly escaped rheumatic fever!

But no cynical insults from a Tilley, or any other grim humourist, rankled long in those days of youth and generally good condition, and, despite Rowland Hill's warning, wonderful animal spirits. The luncheon-time alone was fruitful of delights. When I first joined the service the luncheons were procured from neighbouring taverns; but Colonel Maberly's sense of the fitness of things was annoyed by encountering strange persons wandering through the lobbies, balancing tin-covered dishes and bearing foaming pewter-pots. Rumours were current of his having been seen waving his arms and

"hishing" back a stalwart potman, who, not knowing his adversary, declined to budge. Anyhow, these gentry were refused further admission, and a quarter of an hour—a marvellously elastic quarter of an hour—was allowed us in which to go and procure luncheon at a neighbouring restaurant.

There were plenty of these to choose from. For the aristocratic and the well-to-do there was Dolly's Chop House, up a little court out of Newgate Street: a wonderful old room, heavy-panelled, dark, dingy, with a female portrait which we always understood to be "Dolly" on the walls; with a head waiter in a limp white neckcloth, with a pale face and sleek black hair, who on Sundays was a verger at St. Paul's; but with good joints, and steaks and chops and soups served in a heavy old-fashioned manner at a stiff old-fashioned price.

Almost equally grand, but conforming more to modern notions, was the Cathedral Hotel at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, where there was a wonderful waiter with a graduated scale of gratitude, on which we were always experimenting and imitating. Thus, for the donation of a penny, he, looking uncomfortable, would mutter, "Thenk, sir;" for twopence he would audibly remark, "Thank *you*, sir;" for threepence he would make a grand bow, and say, "Thank *you*, sir; I'm 'blaiged to you." He never varied his programme, though we often tried him. Only last year I saw him, very little changed, walking on the esplanade at Worthing, and looking at the sea as though he regarded it rather as a penny customer. At the Cathedral, too, was an old gentleman, a regular *habitué*, who, as I am afraid he was, a Radical, delighted in the perpetration of one mild joke. He would secure the *Morning Herald*, the Tory organ of those days, and when he had perused it would hand the paper to his opposite neighbour with a bow, and the observation, "Would you like to read any lies, sir?"

We impecunious juniors, however, ventured seldom into these expensive establishments. For us there were cheaper

refectories, two of which achieved great celebrity in their day: Ball's Alamode Beef House in Butcher Hall Lane—I believe Butcher Hall Lane has disappeared in the City improvements, but it used to run at right angles with Newgate Street, near the eastern end of Christ's Hospital—where was to be obtained a most delicious "portion" of stewed beef done up in a sticky, coagulated, glutinous gravy of surpassing richness; and Williams's Boiled Beef House in the Old Bailey, which was well known throughout London, and where I have often seen the great old Bailey advocates of those days, Messrs. Clarkson and Bodkin, discussing their "fourpenny plates." Williams's was a place to be "done" by anyone coming up for the London sights; and there were always plenty of country squires and farmers, and occasionally foreigners, to be found there, though the latter did not seem to be much impressed with the excellence of the *cuisine*.

In those days, too, we used to lunch at places which seem entirely to have disappeared. The "Crowley's Alton Alehouse" is not so frequently met with as it was thirty years ago. The "alehouses" were, in fact, small shops fitted with a beer-engine and a counter; they had been established by Mr. Crowley, a brewer of Alton, on finding the difficulty of procuring ordinary public-houses for the sale of his beer; and at them was sold nothing but beer, ham sandwiches, bread and cheese, but all of the very best. They were exceedingly popular with young men who did not particularly care about hanging round the bars of taverns, and did an enormous trade; but that was in the præ-Spiers & Pond days; and, I am bound to say, all the facilities for obtaining refreshments, and generally speaking the refreshments themselves, have vastly improved since then. There was also another luncheon-house which we used to frequent on Addle Hill—not a bad name for the Doctors' Commons of those days, in which it was situate—and on our way whence we would look in at "the Commons," where the bench, bar, and general arrangement were supplied at that time by a family of the name of Fust—look in with

additional interest, aroused by the associations of the place with *David Copperfield*, then in course of publication.

I knew Doctors' Commons, too, as a short cut to the river, by Paul's Chain to Paul's Wharf, and thence by penny steamboat to Hungerford Bridge (long since pulled down and carted off bodily to Clifton by Bristol, where it spans the Avon); by half-penny steamboat at one time, for in the fury of competition three, the *Ant*, *Bee*, and *Cricket*, were started at that price, but the last-named blew up—it was proved at the inquest that the stoker tied down the safety-valves with strings to increase the speed—at a time when it was loaded with business-men coming into the City; and the news, being received at the Post Office, caused the eager inquiry from one of our rascals, "Any seniors on board?"

It was a somewhat grim jest, but we were like the midship-man who drank the toast, "A bloody war or a sickly season." We were wretchedly paid, and promotion was desperately slow. When I first entered the service the Post Office was one of the worst paid of the public departments and one of the lowest in rank. There seemed to be a general acceptance of idea that the duties there were entirely confined to sorting letters; and I have often been seriously asked by my friends of the outer world whether I had noticed such and such a letter in the course of its transmission. So far as the Secretary's office was concerned, all the letter-sorting, etc., might have been a hundred miles off for what we saw of it; but the public—for as all nations were Gentiles to the Jews, so, to an official, all non-officials are "the public"—the public never seemed to give any heed to the huge amount of ability, patience, experience, and technical knowledge required to insure the prompt and proper transmission of their mails; the postal intercourse with foreign countries and the colonies; the contracts with the great ocean steam-companies; the discipline of the enormous staff with its representatives in every city, town, and village of the United Kingdom; and a hundred other minor details, any friction in the working of which might have thrown a huge portion

of the machine out of gear, and caused indescribable confusion amongst the great commercial circles.

All this work was done in the Secretary's office, the staff of which then numbered about fifty men, all told, who were paid according to the following rate. On entering the service a salary of 90*l.* a year; no increase for three years, when the pay was made 110*l.*; no increase for another three years, when it was raised to 140*l.*; but this involved admission into the body of "clerks in waiting," who took it in turn to sleep at the office, and had to pay for the meals consumed there without any extra allowance. In this, the "assistant," class the salaries advanced by 10*l.* a year until they reached the sum of 260*l.* a year, where they stopped. So that unless he managed to get, through a death-vacancy, into the senior class, which was limited in number, where the salaries commenced at 350*l.* and advanced to 500*l.*, a man after twenty-five years' service would receive 260*l.* a year, and might never get beyond it. In those days, too, a deduction was made for "superannuation allowance"—that is to say, we were mulcted in a contribution to future pensions, which we might or might not receive. Thus, when I was supposed to be getting 90*l.* a year, my quarterly receipt was 21*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.* This cruel tax was afterwards abolished, mainly through the influence of Mr. Disraeli.

It was desperately poor pay, and various efforts had been made to obtain an improved scale, but without effect. *Esprit de corps*, so far as in any way assisting his official inferiors, was wholly lacking in Colonel Maberly's composition. I recollect mentioning, parenthetically, to him once that I had been up nearly all night in connection with some of the clerks'-in-waiting duties. "Well, my good fellow, you're paid for it!" was his sympathetic remark. Thus the Colonel, having just arrived at eleven o'clock, munching his breakfast in easy comfort—the Colonel with his 1500*l.* a year salary, his half-pay, his Irish rents and private fortune—to me, tired out, blind with want of sleep, and passing rich on a hundred and forty pounds a year!

Just about this time—*i.e.*, soon after I reached the "assistant" class—the Postmaster-General of Malta died or resigned; and the appointment being in the gift of our Postmaster-General, with a salary of 500*l.* a year—at that time, to me, an income beyond the dreams of avarice—I applied for it. Colonel Maberly good-naturedly agreed to recommend me for the vacant berth, which I believe I should have obtained, when news came that our last petition for a revision of salaries had been favourably received, and that a Treasury commission would be appointed to inquire into our grievances.

This news materially altered my plans. I had already doubted the wisdom of my course in exchanging the delights of London life, even in poverty, for such an existence as Malta could offer, and I determined to hang on and hope for better times. I accordingly waited on the Colonel, and told him I wished to withdraw my application. "What for?" "Because, sir, I hear there is a chance of improvement here. They say that we are to have a Commission of Inquiry." "A commission!" he cried testily. "My good fellow, do you know what a commission is? A commission is an official machine for cutting down salaries!" However, to my own subsequent delight, I persisted, my application was withdrawn, and another appointment made to Malta. The commission, consisting of Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Elcho (now Earl Wemyss), and a Treasury official, commenced their labours, which extended over many months, with results startling to us. We got a very much improved scale of pay; what was called, in delightful officialese, "the double Secretariat" was abolished; Colonel Maberly was made an extra Commissioner of Audit, with his existing salary; and Rowland Hill was appointed sole Secretary to the Post Office.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AMUSEMENTS OF YOUTH.

1847—1852.

AT the time of my joining the Post Office service my mother was living, as she had been for some years previously, at No. 12, Alpha Road, a thoroughfare which, with its extension of Church Street, connects that portion of the Regent's Park lying between Clarence and Hanover Gates with the Edgware Road. I am afraid, from what I see, that of late years it has somewhat deteriorated, but in those days it was a very pretty place. The houses had large gardens, and the respectability of the locality was unimpeachable, my kind old friend Mr. Thomas Harrison, Commissioner of Inland Revenue, and the family of the late Mr. Serjeant Bompas being our immediate neighbours. Our house was a cosy and comfortable one, and had nearly an acre of garden, which I need scarcely say has now been built over, but which then, despite the London "smuts," produced a fair crop of flowers, and was always green and pleasant to look upon. The one drawback, so far as I was concerned, was the distance from the centre of London and from all places of amusement. There was a good omnibus service to the Post Office, and the ride in the early morning was pleasant enough; but returning home from some festivity late at night, I constantly wished Fate had caused my mother to pitch her tent in some less remote district. For I began to dine out, to go into society, and generally to enjoy myself, almost immediately after my return to the maternal nest, greatly to my mother's amazement, and a little, I fear, to her

sorrow, though she was certainly proud of the way in which I was "taken up." The nine or ten months' absence had done wonders. I left her a *gauche* schoolboy; I returned a young man, not encumbered with an excess of bashfulness, with plenty to say for myself, and with a strong determination to get on in the world.

One of the earliest and most efficient promoters of this desire on my part was my godfather, the Hon. Edmund Byng, of whom I have already made casual mention, then nearly seventy, a bachelor, living at No. 10, Clarges Street, and one of the most eccentric of human beings. He was a very handsome and particularly distinguished-looking old gentleman, with fresh complexion and well-cut features, but suffering greatly from an affection of the eyes, which compelled the wearing of coloured glasses. Until very late in life he never wore a great-coat, but was always dressed in a dark-blue tail-coat with plain flat gold buttons, brown trousers rather tight, brown gaiters, and shoes. His hat was always a very bad one, and he was never seen in the street without a large gingham umbrella, which he carried horizontally tucked under his arm, and which was always coming into violent contact with animate and inanimate objects. His friends used to say that his defective eyesight never precluded his recognising the difference between a pretty and an ugly woman, and his great predilection for beauty, which had been a feature in his youth, was one of the few disagreeable characteristics of his old age. He was very clever, well read—his knowledge of Shakespeare was extraordinary—a confirmed cynic, with, as is so often the case, a great deal of practical benevolence, but full of that bitter satirical humour which is so captivating to youth, and in which, wholly unchecked and outspoken as it was in my old friend, I used to revel. He was known to all sorts and conditions of men, and delighted in gathering those most likely to be diametrically opposed in their views at his table, and egging them on to argument, which on occasion would wax tolerably warm. He had been in his youth very fond of the theatre, and his was

one of the very few houses in those days where actors were invited.

The old gentleman took a great fancy to me, invited me two or three times a week to his table, where he always placed me opposite to him—a rather trying position for a lad of seventeen, where the guests were nearly all distinguished men—and was always pleased if, after leaving my office, I would call for him and give him my arm for a tour of visits or card-leaving. He was a somewhat trying companion on such occasions, for his outspokenness and irritability were excessive. I recollect taking him one day to the door of a very great house, and knocking. "Her Grace at home?" asked Mr. Byng. "Her Grace has gone to Chiswick, sir," replied the hall-porter. "What the devil do you mean, sir," burst out the old gentleman, "by telling me your mistress's movements? I don't want to know them! I asked if she were at home, and all I wanted was a plain answer to that question." Then, with a thump of his umbrella on the doorstep, he pulled me away, and we left the man gazing after us, petrified with amazement.

The dinners in Clarges Street were very plain and simple, but very good in their way. Potatoes of extraordinary size and excellence were always served in their "jackets" and in a huge wooden bowl; port and sherry were the only wines; and most of the decanters had their necks filed, the "lip" having been knocked off. The guests varied, but among the most regular were Lord John Fitzroy, a very high-bred looking old gentleman, a great whist-player, and reminding one altogether of a Thackerayan creation; the late Lord Torrington; John Woodford, of the F.O.; Dr. Dickson, author of *Fallacies of the Faculty;* Mr. Loaden, a smart solicitor in large practice; my colleague, George Harrison; another colleague, Haughton Forrest, a connection of the host; the Hon. and Rev. Fitzroy Stanhope; and John Cooper, the actor. The Earl of Scarborough; Lord Gardner; Horace Pitt, afterwards Lord Rivers; Sir William de Bathe; Mr. Norton, the police magistrate; "Billy" Bennett, actor, and father of Miss Julia Bennett;

Planché, Charles Dance, and Robert Keeley came occasionally.

There, too, I met for the first time the Hon. "Jim" Macdonald. He arrived, I remember, after we were all seated at table, and this, I suppose, annoyed the old gentleman; for when Colonel Macdonald, as he was then, in his airy manner, said, "How d'ye do, Byng? sorry I'm late!" and proffered his hand, our host said, "Sit down, sir! I never shake hot hands! get on with your dinner." Colonel Macdonald smiled and took his seat; but later on, Mr. Byng asking him if he liked the particular dish he was eating, he said it was "very good." "God bless my soul, sir," cried Byng, "what do you mean by that? Of course it's good, sir; everything that comes to this table is good. What I asked you was whether you liked it!"

Mr. Byng was also always very much "down" upon John Cooper, a tragedian of the old school, pompous, solemn, pretentious, and dull. Cooper was a bit of a miser, and Byng was always delighted when the exercise of this niggardly spirit brought the actor to grief. On one occasion, a close summer's evening, when Cooper was expected to dinner, a violent rainstorm came on, and Mr. Byng confided to me his joy that Cooper, who lived in St. James's Place and generally walked across, would be compelled to take a cab. Presently a cab stooped at the door, and Cooper's sonorous voice was heard from the inside, bidding the cabman to knock at the door. "Not I," said the driver, calmly remaining on his box. "What do you mean?" asked Cooper; "I have paid you your fare already." "Fare!" growled the man, still enthroned; "you give me a shillin' when you got in: that was for drivin' of you, not for knockin'; get out and knock yourself!" And the man remaining obdurate, Cooper had to get out in the pouring rain and knock at the door, which the servant, acting under his delighted master's instructions, did not hurry himself to open.

The most regular *habitué* of Clarges Street, however, was a very old German gentleman, a certain Baron de—really, I sup-

pose, von—Feilitzer, a bent, shrunken, wizened old fellow, over eighty years of age, who had, according to the generally received legend, been a page to Frederick the Great, but who was only known to us as Mr. Byng's principal butt and toady. Notwithstanding his age, he had an enormous appetite, which he used to indulge without stint, his host observing him from time to time, and keeping up a running commentary on his proceedings, which was intended to be *sotto voce*, but which was distinctly audible round the delighted table. "Look at him, filling his baronial stomach! God bless my soul, was there ever seen anything like it! why, he eats more at one meal than I do in a month! Look at him putting it away!" And the object of his remarks, who knew perfectly what was going on, would look slyly up from his plate, and, without discontinuing operations, chuckle and say, "Ja, der Byng! der is fonny man!" and take no further heed. The Baron lived in lodgings over a celebrated baker's in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden—the shop is still there—and from time to time we, who, I suppose, must have been considered our patron's henchmen, were expected, after a heavy dinner in Clarges Street, to go off with Mr. Byng in a body to the Baron's lodgings in Covent Garden, where a large and thoroughly British supper of oysters, lobsters, and cold beef was awaiting us, which we were expected to eat. In deference to Mr. Byng's wishes, we used to struggle hard to swallow something, but he always declared that as soon as we were gone the old Baron would set to and clear the board.

I owed a great deal to the kindness of my eccentric old godfather, at whose house and through whom I made many useful acquaintances at that time. He did not go to Court, owing to some slight in connection with a dispute in which his intimate friend, Sir John Conroy, was involved, and it was always understood that he had had the temerity to refuse a Royal invitation, which is, of course, a Royal command; but he was remembered by many great ladies, and through one of them, a patroness of Almack's, he obtained for me a card for one of the last balls of that expiring institution of exclusiveness, which

was then held in Willis's Rooms. I did not know more than two people in the place, and passed a miserably dull evening; but I was accounted remarkably lucky to have obtained such an *entrée*, and rather fancied myself accordingly. Edmund Byng, who must not be confounded with his brother Frederick, well known as "Poodle" Byng, with whom he had little in common, died at an advanced age in 1854 or '55.

I went occasionally to dinner-parties and frequently to balls in my early days, when the *deux-temps* valse had just been imported into England, and we used to dance it to the inspiriting strains of Jullien's or Weippert's band; but I am afraid my real amusements were of a less sober and more Bohemian character. Dancing was just then commencing to be recognised in England as a national pursuit. The public balls of former days had been confined to the dreary "assemblies" of provincial towns, and in London there was nothing of the kind in winter; while in summer, Vauxhall, the ancient and grievously overrated, and Cremorne Gardens, the creation of which as a place of amusement out of the old finely timbered pleasaunce I can well remember, were our *al fresco* resorts. But in the year 1846, while I was in Germany, I had information from friends that one Emile Laurent, a Frenchman, had taken the old Adelaide Gallery, converted it into a paradise, and called it the Casino.

The Adelaide Gallery, which was situated at the northern, or St. Martin's Church, end of the Lowther Arcade (where as a child I used to eat buns at Miss Ehrhardt the confectioner's, and buy toys of John Binge, who combined toy-selling in the daytime with theatrical singing at night, and who was called "The Singing Mouse," owing to the smallness of his sweet tenor voice), was started as a science "show." Its principal attractions were Perkins's steam-gun, which discharged a shower of bullets, but was never adopted in serious warfare; and the gymnotus, or electrical eel, a creature which emitted shocks on its back being touched. Parents and persons in charge of youth were great patrons of the Adelaide Gallery, which flourished

until a rival institution appeared in the shape of the Polytechnic, in Upper Regent Street, which speedily and completely took the wind out of the sails of the original establishment.

Ah me! the Polytechnic, with its diving-bell, the descent in which was so pleasantly productive of imminent head-splitting; its diver, who rapped his helmet playfully with the coppers which had been thrown at him; its half-globes, brass pillars, and water-troughs so charged with electricity as nearly to dislocate the arms of those that touched them; with its microscope, wherein the infinitesimal creatures in a drop of Thames water appeared like antediluvian animals engaged in combat; with its lectures, in which Professor Bachhoffner was always exhibiting chemistry to "the tyro"; with its dissolving views of "A Ship," afterwards "on fi-er," and an illustration of—as explained by the unseen chorus—"The Hall of Waters—at Constant—nopull—where an unfort—nate Englishman—lost his life—attempting—to discover the passage!"—with all these attractions, and a hundred more which I have forgotten, no wonder that the Polytechnic cast the old Adelaide Gallery into the shade, and that the proprietors of the latter were fain to welcome an entire and sweeping change of programme.

Such an entertainment as that afforded by Laurent's Casino had never been seen before in London. The hall was fairly large, and handsomely decorated; the band, led by young Laurent, and with a wonderful performer on the cornet, named Arban, played the liveliest tunes and kept superb time; and amongst the light refreshments was to be found the then recently imported sherry-cobbler—in itself a source of delight to thirsty dancers, who, as ball beverages, had hitherto found nothing between nasty negus and fiery champagne. Laurent's Casino, no doubt for its novelty's sake, was visited by all kinds and conditions of men; it was altogether a quieter and more respectable place than the flaring flaunting Argyll Rooms into which it afterwards developed. Meanwhile, encouraged by its success, another concern of a somewhat similar character had been established.

What is now the gorgeous Holborn Restaurant was in those days the dingy Holborn Swimming-bath—a very gloomy and, truth to tell, a very dirty and smelly place of recreation. I remember once, being mad about swimming—an art which I had just acquired in the delicious Brill's Bath at Brighton—coming to the Holborn establishment full of pleasurable anticipation; and I remember, as soon as I had seen and—well, smelt the water into which I proposed plunging, putting on my jacket again, and sacrificing the shilling which I had paid for my bath. Later, the dirty water was drained off, the shabby dressing-boxes done away with, the bath covered with a flooring of springy boards, and the whole place painted and renovated, and an excellent band, under the direction of a Mr. Parker (who maintained his position for years), engaged. There, too, as principal master of the ceremonies, was a curious old fellow called Gourriet, who, with Signor Venafra—who used to spend his days at Davis's, the tobacconist's in the Quadrant—had for years been one of the leading *ballerinos* at Her Majesty's Theatre, and whose rapt enthusiasm in beating time to the music, or pantomimic extravagance in soothing any little dispute, was equally delicious. The Holborn Casino was a much quieter place of resort than its rival, and was frequented by a different class: there was some element of respectability among its female visitors, while among the men the genus "swell," which predominated at the other place, was here almost entirely absent, the ordinary attendants being young fellows from the neighbouring Inns of Court, medical students, Government clerks, with a sprinkling of the shopocracy.

There were one or two other and superior temples of Terpsichore—the Portland Rooms, generally known as "Mott's," from the proprietary, Mr. and Mrs. Mott, who had some connection with the ballet department of the Opera, and where, in consequence, one generally found some pretty members of the corps among the dancers. The rooms were in what was then called Foley Place—a broad thoroughfare opposite the chapel in Great Portland Street—the admission-fee was half a crown,

and there was a fair five-shilling supper, served in an oddly-shaped low-ceilinged room like the cabin of a ship. To shout "Pol-kar!" after the manner of Mr. Frere, the M.C. of the Portland Rooms, was in those days a very humorous performance. More aristocratic, but nothing like so popular, was "Weippert's," a weekly *réunion* held at the Princess's Concert-rooms, at the back of the Princess's Theatre, where dancing was carried on from late till early hours, to the music of Weippert's at that time celebrated band.

Travelling by the South-Western Railway, I often look out, in passing the Vauxhall Station, at a large square brick house, the sole landmark of the famous Vauxhall Gardens, long since covered with houses. This individual house was the residence of Mr. Wardell, the lessee of the Gardens, and the square space in front of it used to be filled all night with cabs waiting for hire. The palmy days of Vauxhall were, of course, long before my time, when Simpson, the renowned master of the ceremonies, flourished, and Jos Sedley got drunk on rack-punch, and large parties of the highest aristocracy visited the place, and supped in the queer little arbours and supper-boxes with which it was dotted. The arbours and supper-boxes were there in my time, and facing the pay-place was a great sticking-plaster transparency of Simpson executing his celebrated bow, and with the words, "Welcome to the Royal Property!" in a ribbon surrounding his head; but the aristocracy had deserted it, and no wonder.

It was a very ghastly place: of actual garden there was no sign; long covered arcades, gravel-strewn and lit with little coloured oil-lamps; an open-air orchestra, the front covered with a huge shell-shaped sounding-board, under which the singer stood; a few plaster statues dotted here and there; a hermit in a false beard, dwelling in a "property" cave, who told fortunes; a built-up scene in "profile" on the firework ground, representing sometimes Vesuvius, sometimes a town to be bombarded (the "Siege of Acre" was, I recollect, popular at one time), but always utilized for firework purposes. One year

it was, I recollect, the Piazza of St. Mark at Venice; and an acrobat, calling himself Joel Il Diavolo, made a "terrific descent" from the top of the Campanile, coming head-first down a wire surrounded by blazing fireworks, and with squibs and crackers in his cap and heels. In our uncertain climate an open-air place of entertainment must always be a doubtful speculation, and vast sums of money were lost in Vauxhall, though Mr. Gye, afterwards *impresario* of the Royal Italian Opera, was said to have made it pay. The liveliest time of the Gardens in my recollection was when its chief attraction was a circus, with Madame Caroline, who first introduced into England the ordinary habit-and-hat riding now so popular as the *haute école*, and Auriol, the Prince of French clowns, whose merry self-satisfied cry of "Houp-là!" is a household word in ring-matters to the present day.

But certainly during my recollection Vauxhall Gardens was never a popular place of recreation. The charge for admission was high—seldom less than half a crown—and the journey there was long, difficult, and expensive; for, to add to the cab-fare, which was large, there was the bridge-toll and a turnpike—together ninepence. The refreshments partaken of by the "quality"—the skinny fowls, transparent ham, oleaginous salad, the champagne and rack-punch—were, of course, also enormously dear; but there was a sly spot at the back of the orchestra, where were dispensed to the knowing ones huge healthy sandwiches and foaming stout served in earthenware tankards, the pleasant memory of which abides by me yet. It may therefore be readily imagined that the impecunious youth of the period, among whom I was numbered, were much more in favour of Cremorne, which was opened as a public garden just about this time, and which, in comparison with Vauxhall, at least was cheap and cheery.

The gardens were large and well laid out; some of the grand old trees had been left standing, and afforded pleasant relief to the town eyes which had been staring all day at brick and stucco, while their murmuring rustle was pleasant to the ears

aching with the echo of city traffic. There were plenty of amusements—a circular dancing platform, with a capital band in a large kiosk in the middle; a lot of *jeux innocens*, such as you find at a French fair; once a week a balloon ascent, and a very good firework display. The admission-fee was one shilling; there was a hot dinner for half a crown, a cold supper for the same money; and it was not considered necessary, as at Vauxhall, to go in for expense; on the contrary, beer flowed freely: and it was about this time, I think, and at Cremorne, that the insidious "long" drinks—soda and "something"—now so popular, first made their appearance. Occasionally there were big banquets organized by certain "swells," and held there, when there would be heavy drinking, and sometimes a row—on Derby night, once, when there was a free fight, which lasted for hours, involving the complete smash of everything smashable; and I mind me of another occasion, when a gigantic Irishman, now a popular M.P., sent scores of waiters flying by the force of his own unaided fists. But, on the whole, the place was well and quietly conducted, and five minutes after the bell for closing rang—just before midnight—the gardens were deserted. There was a general rush for the omnibuses and cabs, which were in great demand, and for one or two seasons there was a steamboat which left the adjacent Cadogan pier at the close of the entertainment, and carried passengers to Hungerford Bridge, and which was very popular.

I have mentioned the Adelaide Gallery and the Polytechnic Institution, and there were many other exhibition-places eminently respectable and popular in my youthful days, which have since been done away with, and the very names of which are now scarcely heard. Foremost of these was the Coliseum, on the east side of the Regent's Park, covering the space now occupied, I should say, by Cambridge Gate to the front and Coliseum Terrace to the rear—an enormous polygon, a hundred and twenty-six feet in diameter, and over a hundred feet high, built from the designs of Decimus Burton, whose best-known work nowadays is the Marble Arch. The industrious John

Timbs, in his *Curiosities of London*, tells us that the Coliseum —or Colosseum, as he spells it—was so called from its colossal size, and not from any supposed resemblance to its namesake in Rome. But this spoils the story of the not too cultured cornet in the Blues, who from Rome wrote to his friend, "I see they've got a Coliseum here, too; but it is not in such good repair as that one near our Albany Street Barracks." I remember it well—my father, in partnership with John Braham, once owned it, to his sorrow—with its wonderful panoramas of London by day and London by night, best things of the kind until eclipsed by the "Siege of Paris" in the Champs Elysées; its glyptotheca, full of plaster casts; its Swiss châlet, with a real waterfall, and a melancholy old eagle flopping about its "property" rocks; its stalactite cavern, prepared by Bradwell and Telbin; and its sham ruins near the desolate portico.* In a small dark tank in the interior of the building I once skated on some artificial ice; and there was a lecture-theatre, in which I found myself, just before the final doom of the establishment (I had come in for shelter from a rain-storm), one of an audience of three listening to an entertainment given by a little gentleman, who was nothing daunted by the paucity of his appreciators, and who sang and danced away as if we had been three thousand. This plucky neophyte, then very young, has since developed into that excellent actor, Mr. Edward Righton.

To the Coliseum, some years before its final fall, was added the Cyclorama—an extraordinarily realistic representation of the earthquake of Lisbon. The manner in which the earth heaved and was rent, the buildings toppled over, and the sea rose, was most cleverly contrived, and had a most terrifying effect upon the spectators; frightful rumblings, proceeding apparently from under your feet, increased the horror, which was anything but diminished by accompanying musical perform-

* The gallery from which the vast panoramas of London were inspected was reached by a spiral staircase, and also by the "ascending room," the precursor of the "lifts," "elevators," and "ascenseurs," now to be found in every European and American hotel.

ances on that awful instrument, the apollonicon. Never was better value in fright given for money. The Diorama, on the east side of Park Square, Regent's Park (a chapel now stands on its site), was memorable from the fact that the room in which the spectator of the picture sat was made to revolve at intervals, so that the two scenes of which the exhibition consisted were brought into view without persons quitting their seats.

But far the best of all these panoramic shows was the series exhibited at the Old Gallery of Illustration in Waterloo Place, called "The Overland Route," and representing all the principal places between Southampton and Calcutta. This was the work of those admirable scene-painters, Thomas Grieve and William Telbin, and was executed in their painting-rooms in Charles Street, Drury Lane, a notorious thieves' quarter. The human figures were by Absolon, the animals by Herring and Harrison Weir. Such a combination of excellence had never been seen, and a clear, concise, and most pleasantly delivered descriptive comment on the passing scene by Mr. Stocqueler, an author and journalist of the day, enhanced the success, which was tremendous. In those days, too, there was always to be found on the north side of Leicester Square a clever panorama of some beautiful European scenery, painted, or at least owned, by a gentleman named Burford, of whom it was said that he could never be an orphan, as he was never without a pa-nor-a-ma. Also among daylight and respectable places of amusement of my youth were the Chinese Exhibition at the St. George's Gallery, Hyde Park, on the site where the "tap" of the Alexandra Hotel now is—an extraordinary collection of the details of Chinese life, with some admirable wax figures representing the different ranks and classes (a diorama of the Holy Land, a visit to which had a great effect on my life, as will be subsequently shown, was afterwards exhibited here), and the Chinese junk, a veritable Chinese vessel, manned by a Chinese crew, "without," as Dickens said, "a profile amongst the lot," which sailed from Hong-Kong

and anchored in the Thames off gloomy Babylon. One of the petty officers of this junk, presenting himself at the ceremonial of the opening of the Great Exhibition in '51, with pigtail and national costume, and being mistaken for a grandee, was received with the greatest honour, and had one of the best places in the show.

Walking in the Park and perambulating the leading West End thoroughfares was a cheap and never-failing source of amusement to me in my youth. I soon learned to recognise the celebrities of the day of all kinds, and I generally had as companion some one who had served as a *flâneur* much longer than myself, and who enabled me to add to my list of acquaintance by sight. In those days the fashionable drive and promenade were along the north side of the Serpentine—just previously they had been from the Marble Arch to Apsley House—and there were as many carriages on Sundays as on any other day—perhaps more. I can well remember Lady Blessington, a fair, fat, middle-aged woman, in a big heavy swinging chariot, glistening—the chariot, not her ladyship—with varnish, and profusely emblazoned with heraldry, and, with two enormous footmen, cane-carrying, powder-headed, and silk-stockinged, hanging on behind.* One of the Misses Power, her nieces, and remarkably pretty girls, generally accompanied her ladyship.

There, in a hooded cabriolet, the fashionable vehicle for men-about-town, with an enormous champing horse, and the trimmest of tiny grooms—"tigers," as they were called—half standing on the footboard behind, half swinging in the air, clinging on to the straps, would be Count d'Orsay, with clear-cut features and dark chestnut hair, the king of the dandies,

* The late John Heneage Jesse, "Jack Jesse" to his intimates, the well known author, had an aversion, amounting to a positive 'phobia, for the British Jeames. He has been known to stand in St. James's Street on a Drawing-room day, at the edge of the kerb, and with the end of his stick, which he dipped into the road-puddle, daub the immaculate stockings of the passing flunkeys, who, as he well knew, dare not move from their stations, accompanying the act with much humorous language.

the cynosure of all eyes, the greatest "swell" of the day. He was an admirable whip—he is reported on one occasion, by infinite spirit and dash, to have cut the wheel off a brewer's dray which was bearing down upon his light carriage, and to have spoken of it afterwards as "the triumph of mind over matter"—and always drove in faultless white kid gloves, with his shirt-wristbands turned back over his coat-cuffs, and his whole "turn-out" was perfection. By his side was occasionally seen Prince Louis Napoleon, an exile too, after his escape from Ham, residing in lodgings in King Street, St. James's—he pointed out the house to the Empress Eugénie when, as Emperor of the French, on his visit to Queen Victoria, he drove by it. He was a constant visitor of Lady Blessington's at Gore House. Albert Smith, in later years, used to say he wondered whether, if he called at the Tuileries, the Emperor would pay him "that eighteenpence," the sum which one night at Gore House he borrowed from A. S. to pay a cabman.

There were no photographs in the shop-windows in those days, but the lithographed likenesses of beauties appearing in Albums and Keepsakes, and dear to Mr. Guppy and Mr. Jobling, enabled us to recognise some of the ladies we saw in their carriages or opera-boxes. The Duchess of Sutherland, Mistress of the Robes to the Queen, was then in the full splendour of her matronly beauty; the Duchess of Wellington, Lady Constance Leveson-Gower, afterwards Duchess of Westminster, Lady Clementina Villiers, and her sister Lady Adela Ibbetson, Lady Otway, Mrs. Norton, Lady Dufferin, Lady Pollington, Lady Duff-Gordon, were amongst the best known and the most renowned. There were handsome men in those days: Horace Pitt, afterwards Lord Rivers; Cecil Forester, now Lord Forester; Manners Sutton, afterwards Lord Canterbury; Lincoln Stanhope; a knot of guardsmen—Henry de Bathe, Charles Seymour, Cuthbert Ellison, "Jerry" Meyrick, "Hippy" Damer, Henry Otway, Henry Collingwood Ibbetson, and his brother Captain Charles. Among the Park riders—a regimental band played twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays, in

Kensington Gardens, close by the Magazine, where the people promenaded, and the equestrians formed in a long line, with their horses' heads facing the sunken wall—I remember Lord Cantilupe, a tremendous swell, always lounging about and half reclining on his horse's back, as he was inimitably portrayed by Doyle; Matthew Higgins, "Jacob Omnium," an enormous man, grey-whiskered, stern-featured, but with soft eyes, riding an enormous horse; Lord Palmerston; the Duke of Wellington, acknowledging all salutations with his lifted forefinger, and closely attended by his groom; Dr. Billing, on an old white nag; Frank Grant, afterwards P.R.A.; Lord Cardigan, very stiff in the saddle; Lord Lucan, looking pretty much as he does now; Sir Bellingham Graham, a mighty hunter; and Jim Mason, the steeplechase-rider, whose seat and hands surely have never been surpassed.

Coaching was at its lowest ebb just then, and though I suppose the Four-in-Hand Club actually existed, I have only a remembrance of one "drag" which went about London, driven by a common-looking man, of whom the legend ran that he had been a butcher, and had money left him by his wife on condition of driving so many miles daily. But there were plenty of vehicular notabilities in the Park: the Hon. and Rev. Fitzroy Stanhope, easiest and most courteous of divines, in the four-wheeled trap called after his name; Lord Clanricarde, in a hooded phaeton with one horse, but that one a wonder; Lord Huntingtower, in a great banging, rattling mail-phaeton; Mr. Tod-Heatley, in the first private hansom cab ever seen in London. Gigs are now relegated to country doctors' use. Tilburys, with a spring behind; britskas, with a back seat called a "rumble" for servants; chariots, with cane-bearing footmen, have all disappeared; and broughams, dog-carts, T-carts, and victorias have come in their place. In those days smoking in the street was an unpardonable solecism; a lady driving a pony would have been considered to have unsexed herself, while the man seated by her side and passively allowing her to drive would have been voted a milksop and a molly.

23406

Sir George Wombwell and Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence were social celebrities of those times: the Damon and Pythias of clubland, they were scarcely ever seen apart. Constant companionship seemed to have made them alike—two red-faced, cheery, kindly, bell-hatted, frock-coated, wide-trousered old boys. A stroll in Parliament Street in the afternoon would always produce its crop of political celebrities: Sir Robert Peel, a demure-looking man, in a white waistcoat; Lord John Russell, very small, with too much hat and an unpleasant curl of the lip; Lord Elphinstone, very good-looking; Mr. Cobden, very common-looking; the Marquis of Lansdowne, a venerable personage; Mr. A. H. Layard, then just becoming known as the discoverer of Nineveh; a wild-eyed, thin, gesticulating creature, Chisholm Anstey, who impeached Lord Palmerston; and the eccentric Colonel Sibthorp. These were prominent persons whom I remember; but the introduction of photography and the publication of portraits and caricatures by the illustrated journals have given notoriety to a vast number of persons who thirty years ago would have remained unknown.

Few places are more changed, and changed for the better, in the period of my memory, than the dining-rooms and restaurants of London. In the days of my early youth there was, I suppose, scarcely a capital city in Europe so badly provided with eating-houses as ours; not numerically, for there were plenty of them, but the quality was all round bad. And this was not for lack of custom, or of customers of an appreciative kind; for, as I shall have occasion to point out, there were comparatively few clubs at that time, and those which were in existence had not nearly so many members, nor were nearly so much frequented, for dining purposes at least, as they now are. There was not, it is true, in any class so much money to spend as there is now: young men who to-day sit down to soup, fish, *entrées*—then called "made dishes"—a roast, a bird, a sweet, a savoury, and a bottle of claret, would then have been content with a slice off the joint, a bit of cheese, and a pint of beer; but everything was fifty per cent. cheaper in

those times, and there was an ample profit on what was supplied.

The improvement, as I shall show, came in suddenly. There were no Spiers & Pond, and, of course, none of the excellent establishments owned by them; no St. James's Hall, Café Royal, Monico's, Gatti's, Bristol or Continental restaurants, scarcely one of the now fashionable dining-houses. Verrey's was in existence, to be sure, but it was regarded as a "Frenchified" place, and was very little patronized by the young men of the day, though it had a good foreign connection. Dubourg's, in the Haymarket, opposite the theatre, was in the same category, though more patronized for suppers. The Café de l'Europe, next door to the Haymarket Theatre, originally started by Henry Hemming, who had been *jeune premier* at the Adelphi, was, notwithstanding its foreign name, a purely English house, as far as its cooking was concerned. All these places, however, were far beyond the means of me and my friends. If we wanted foreign fare—and, truth to tell, in those days of youth and health, and vast appetite and little money, we were not much given to it—we would go to Rouget's in Castle Street, Leicester Square; or to Giraudier's in the Haymarket; or, best of all, to Berthollini's in St. Martin's Place, I think it was called—a narrow thoroughfare at the back of Pall Mall East. A wonderful man Berthollini: a tall thin Italian in a black wig—there was a current report that many of the dishes were made out of his old wigs and boots; but this was only the perversion by the ribalds of the statement of his supporters, that the flavouring was so excellent that the basis of the dish was immaterial—who superintended everything himself and was ubiquitous; now flying to the kitchen, now uncorking the wine, now pointing with his long skinny fore-finger to specially lovely pieces in the dish. There was a story that some rash man once asked to be allowed to inspect the kitchen, and that Berthollini had a fit in consequence. I have no doubt that the culinary preparations were mysterious; but they were well flavoured, highly seasoned, and much relished by us. They,

and the pint of Chablis or claret—all red wine which was not port was claret in those days—were a pleasant change from the eternal joint, the never-to-be-avoided chop or steak, to which the tavern-dinęr was then condemned.

The "Slap-bang"—so called from the rate at which its meal was devoured, or from the easy manners of those who served it—was, in truth, not a very appetising place : it is admirably described in *Bleak House*, where Mr. Guppy entertains the hungry Jobling and the preternaturally-knowing Smallweed. At "Slap-bangs" napkins were unknown ; the forks were steel-pronged, the spoons battered and worn, the tablecloths ring-stained with pewter pots and blotched with old gravy and bygone mustard. The room was partitioned off into "boxes," with hard and narrow seats, and a narrow slip of tressel-table between them : attendance was given sometimes by females, fat and bouncing, like the "Polly" of Mr. Guppy's banquet; or dirty and slatternly ; or by men in the shiniest and greasiest of black suits. I used frequently to dine at Izant's in Bucklersbury, where indeed everything was well done, mainly for the pleasure of being quit of these wretches, and being waited on by men dressed in wholesome clean linen blouses.

In the City, Tom's, Joe's, and Baker's ; Dolly's Chop-house, the Daniel Lambert on Ludgate Hill, the Cheshire Cheese, the Cock, the Rainbow, Dick's, Anderton's—all in Fleet Street—the Mitre in Fetter Lane, the Southampton in Southampton Buildings, Rudkin's Salutation Tavern in Newgate Street, and a house in Brownlow Street, Holborn, where wonderful Burton ale was on draught, were much frequented.

More westerly places were Short's, the well-known wine-shop in the Strand, where at that time dinners were served in the upper rooms ; its neighbour, the Edinburgh Castle ; Campbell's Scotch Stores in Duke Street, Regent Street, where Mr. Blanchard, the founder of the celebrated Restaurant Blanchard, learned his business ; Sinclair's Scotch Stores in Oxford Circus ; and the American Stores near the Princess's Theatre : there were also some "Shades" under what is now the

Empire Theatre, and what I have known variously as Miss Linwood's needlework exhibition, the Walhalla for *poses plastiques*, Saville House for athletic shows, etc., etc. In these underground "Shades" a fair dinner at eighteenpence a head could be had in cleanliness and quiet; and Albert and Arthur Smith and I used frequently to dine there while the Mont Blanc entertainment was in embryo, and discuss its chances of success.

I well remember the excitement with which we young fellows about town received the rumour that a dining-place would shortly be opened where things would be done as at the clubs, and the eagerness with which we tested its truth. This, which was the pioneer of improvement, was the Grand Divan Restaurant, or, as it was better known, "Simpson's," in the Strand. The name of Simpson was at that time a power in the hotel and restaurant world. There were two brothers, one of whom had the well-known fish ordinary at Billingsgate—a tremendous repast for eighteenpence, where the water stood on the table in old hock bottles, where everything was of the best, and where, after the cloth had been removed, there was much smoking of long pipes and drinking of grogs. The other brother at that time owned the Albion, opposite Drury Lane Theatre, principally in vogue as a supper-house; and was afterwards the lessee of Cremorne Gardens. Rumour, for once, had not exaggerated; the whole thing was a revolution and a revelation. Large tables and comfortable chairs in place of the boxes and benches; abundance of clean linen tablecloths and napkins; plated forks and spoons; electro-plated tankards instead of pewter pots; finger-glasses; the joint wheeled to your side, and carved by a being in white cap and jacket; a choice of cheeses, pulled bread, and a properly made-out bill: all these were wondrous and acceptable innovations. The edibles and potables were all of first quality; the rooms were large and well ventilated; the attendants were clean, civil, and quick; and the superintendence of "Charles" —formerly of the Albion, but who had now blossomed into

Mr. Daws—was universal. Of course every well-conducted restaurant nowadays is conducted on these principles—"all can grow the flower now, for all have got the seed;" but the honour of originating the new style belongs to Simpson.

A want of a similar establishment at the West End was speedily supplied by the conversion of the fine building in St. James's Street—which, originally Crockford's Club, had been utilized as a dancing-shop and a picture-exhibition—into the Wellington Restaurant, which, carried out on Simpson's model, flourished for a time. The rent, however, was so enormous as to swallow up all the profits, and the concern was abandoned. Simpson's also served as the prototype for a more easterly imitator: Messrs. Sawyer and Strange, great refreshment contractors of that day, started the "London dinner" in the upper floors of the house in Fleet Street, the corner of Chancery Lane, and for some time were successful.

Fish dinners at Greenwich and Blackwall were, I think, more in vogue then than they are now; indeed, the latter place, where Lovegrove's, the Brunswick, and the Artichoke flourished, is quite extinct as a dining-place. It was, I recollect, at Lovegrove's that the directors of the then existing General Screw Steam Shipping Company—of which Mr. J. Lyster O'Beirne was secretary—gave, after the launch of one of their vessels from Rolt & Mare's yard, a great lunch, at which Shirley Brooks was present, and which he utilized for descriptive purposes in the opening chapter of "Miss Violet and her Offers," his first contribution to *Punch*. The only Greenwich house of that day now remaining is the Trafalgar, little altered since it was owned by Mr. Hart, whose rival—Mr. Quartermaine, who established the present Ship—then conducted the Crown and Sceptre, now extinct or very much diminished.

In those days there were two smaller fish-dinner houses at Greenwich, called, I think, the Yacht and the Ship Torbay. In those days people drove to Greenwich—the rail was comparatively little used by the luxurious—and every summer evening, and especially on a Sunday, there would be a serried

phalanx of fifty or sixty horseless carriages, drags, barouches, cabriolets, broughams, and hansoms outside the principal hotels. The laying of the tram-rails on the principal roads put an end to all possibilities of pleasant driving: the charioteers and owners of private vehicles declined to submit them to the unavoidable twists and wrenchings; and the result to the Greenwich tavern-keepers is, it is said, a loss of seven thousand a year. Richmond, as a dining-place, occupied then much the same position as now. The view was always better than the dinner. The old Star and Garter, since burned down, was a much more modest hostelry than the enormous edifice which stands on its site, and competed for custom with the Castle, recently closed. The Roebuck and the Talbot were as they now are; and at Hampton Court, beside the still existent Mitre and Greyhound at either end of the gardens, there was a famous hotel not far from the river called the Toy. Toton's —afterwards Wilcox's—at Mortlake, the Swan at Staines, the Bells of Ouseley, the Cricketers at Chertsey, were well known to the comparatively few men who took interest in the river; while below bridge Waite's Hotel at Gravesend was largely patronized by eastward-bound passengers who joined ship there.

Those were the days of supper, for at that time a beneficent Legislature had not ordained that, at a certain hour, no matter how soberly we may be enjoying ourselves in a house of public entertainment, we were to be turned into the streets. There were many houses which combined a supper with a dinner business; there were some which only took down their shutters when ordinary hard-working people were going to bed. Among the former were the oyster-shops—Quinn's in the Haymarket; Scott's, facing that broad-awake thoroughfare; a little house (name forgotten) in Ryder Street—not Wilton, who closed at twelve; Godwin's, with the celebrated Charlotte as its attendant Hebe, in the Strand near St. Mary's Church. Godwin's was occasionally patronized by journalists and senators who lived in the Temple precincts: the beaming face of Morgan John

O'Connell was frequently to be seen there; and Douglas Jerrold would sometimes look in. Charlotte was supposed to be one of the few who had ever silenced the great wit: he had been asking for some time for a glass of brandy-and-water; and when at length Charlotte placed before him the steaming jorum, she said, "There it is, you troublesome little man; mind you don't fall into it and drown yourself." Jerrold, who was very sensitive to any remarks upon his small and bent figure, collapsed.

Other famous oyster-houses of that day, as they are of this, were Lynn's in Fleet Street, Pimm's in the Poultry, and Sweeting's in Cheapside; but they were all closed at night. Restaurants where the presence of ladies at supper was encouraged rather than objected to were the Café de l'Europe, in the large room at the back (the front room, entered immediately from the street, was reserved for gentlemen, and will be mentioned elsewhere), and Dubourg's, already mentioned, the proprietor of which—a fat elderly Frenchman, his portly presence much girt with gold watch-chain—was a constant attendant at the Opera, and was well known to the *roués* of the day. Then there were the regular "night-houses," the company and the doings at which were, I imagine, equivalent to those at "The Finish," as depicted in the career of Tom and Jerry by George Cruikshank. There were many; but the two best known and most frequented were the Blue Posts and "Bob Croft's."

The Blue Posts—not to be confounded with the well-known tavern of the same name in Cork Street—in the lower portion of the Haymarket, was, I suppose, an ordinary public-house, though it never struck any of its frequenters to regard it in that light. For a vast number of people it was the regular place of adjournment on the closing of the theatres and the dancing-halls. At midnight the passage from the outside door, the large space in front of the bar, the stairs leading to the upper rooms, the upper rooms themselves, were closely packed by a dense mass of men and women, through which no man

but one could have forced his way. This was a waiter, a great favourite, owing to his imperturbable good-humour, and well known from his peculiar cry of "Mind the sauce, please! mind the sauce and the gravy!" with which he, heavily laden with supper-trays, would steer his way through the throng. The house, taken for what it was, was exceedingly well conducted; and though the conversation might have been more choice and more subdued, any rowdyism was at once put down. This was, in a measure, due to the respect felt by the regular frequenters for the landlord and landlady, an old Scotch couple named Dick, shrewd and business-like, but withal kindly, quiet, respectable people, who did many a good turn to some of their customers when out of luck. They lived at Hampstead, going up there in the early morning, coming down into London late at night; and I often thought of the strange contrast between their daylight existence, among their flowers and birds, in fresh air and perfect quiet, and the thick atmosphere reeking with spirits and tobacco, the roar and din and confusion of the strange company in which their nights were passed.

"Bob Croft's" was a much later house, and one of a different stamp, though he too lived in the daytime in the country, in a pretty cottage at Kingston Hill. He was a burly, red-faced, jolly-looking fellow, in a white waistcoat, not without humour of a very broad kind, and famous for much undiluted repartee. When the balloon in which Albert Smith and others ascended from Vauxhall came to grief, and Albert was spilt into the road, he was picked up by Croft, who used to narrate the story as a strange meeting of two celebrated characters. Bob Croft's daughter married a baronet, and afterwards appeared with fair success on the stage.

Although the palmy days of public gambling were over, there were several private, very private, establishments at which the interesting games of roulette and French hazard were nightly played, and where the stakes varied from a five-pound note to a humble half-crown. The Berkeley in Albemarle Street; and Lyley's; Morris's in Jermyn Street, over a bootmaker's shop;

"Goody" Levy's—the gentleman who came to grief over the Running Rein case—in Panton Street: these and several others flourished at the time, prototypes of "The Little Nick," where readers of *Pendennis* will remember Sir Francis Clavering wooed fickle Fortune. The *modus operandi* was pretty much the same everywhere. You pulled a bright-knobbed bell, which responded with a single muffled clang, and the door was opened silently by a speechless man who closed it quickly behind you. Confronting you was another door, generally sheeted with iron covered with green baize: in its centre a small glazed aperture, through which the visitor, in his temporary quarantine, was closely scrutinized. If the survey was unsatisfactory—if, that is to say, he looked like a spy or a stranger merely prompted by curiosity—he was bidden to be off, and in case of need he was thrust out by the strong and silent porter. If he were known, or "looked all right," the door was opened, and the visitor passed up richly carpeted stairs into the first floor. The front room was set apart for play: a long table covered with a green cloth, divided by tightly stretched pieces of string into the spaces for the "in" and the "out"—the game being hazard—and a few chairs for the players; the croupiers, each armed with a hooked stick, instead of the usual rake, for the collection of the money, faced each other in the middle of the table; the shutters were closed, and thick curtains were drawn. The back room was given up to a substantial supper of cold chickens, joints, salads, etc., which with sherry, brandy, etc., was provided gratis. In the places I have named the play, taken for what it was, was perfectly fair, so that there was no occasion for the presence of sham players, "bonnets," as they are called, who act as decoys; the company was mostly composed of men-about-town, the majority of them middle-aged, with occasionally a lawyer, a West End tradesman, and almost invariably a well-known usurer, who came there, however, to play, not to ply his trade.

Money was lost and won without display of excitement: I

never saw anything approaching a "scene" in a London gaming-house. The greatest excitement was once, when about 2 A.M., in the middle of play, after a sharp whistle outside which caused the croupiers at once to cut and clear away the strings dividing the table, and to cover it with a white cloth, swallowing, as some said, the dice—at all events, instantly hiding them—we heard a tremendous crash below, and found the police were breaking down the iron door with sledge-hammers. The scene was very like that so cleverly portrayed in *Artful Cards:* when the inspector and his men entered, they found a few gentlemen peacefully supping, smoking, and chatting. We had to give our names and addresses, but never heard any more of it.

The most popular places of resort for such young men as kept late hours were, however, the supper- and-singing taverns, which were always respectably conducted, though in my early days there was an element of ribaldry in the amusement provided which was afterwards suppressed. The best known of these were the Coal Hole, the Cider Cellars, and Evans's. The Coal Hole was in a court out of the Strand, near the Cigar Divan, Fountain Court I think it is called. It has long since been appropriated to other purposes, and is now the Occidental Tavern. The landlord was one John Rhodes, a burly fellow with a bass voice, who sat at the head of the singers' table and joined in the glees, which were sung without instrumental accompaniment. From my recollection of Rhodes and his room, I imagine that he was Hoskins, the landlord of the Cave of Harmony, where Costigan sang the outrageous song which caused Colonel Newcome to rate the company. It is certain that "little Nadab, the improvisatore," of whom Thackeray speaks, was a certain Mr. Sloman, who called himself "the only English improvisatore," who used to sing at the Coal Hole, and the outpourings of whose improvisations were remarkably like the specimens given in *The Newcomes.* Only, in my time at least, the singing at the Coal Hole was confined to professionals, and no visitor would have been allowed to

volunteer a song, as did the Colonel. The celebrities of the place were Rhodes himself; a young fellow called Cave—the first, I believe, to introduce to England the American banjo as an accompaniment for the voice; and a dreadful old creature called Joe Wells, who used to sing most disgusting ditties. The Coal Hole never had the reputation or the position of either of its rivals, and was the first to succumb to the alteration in public taste.

The Cider Cellars, next to the stage-door of the Adelphi in Maiden Lane, now converted into a Jewish synagogue, had deservedly a far wider renown. It was described, under its own name, by Albert Smith in the *Medical Student* and *Mr. Ledbury*, and was the prototype of the Back Kitchen, immortalised in *Pendennis*. Thus Thackeray chronicles its company: "Healthy country tradesmen and farmers in London for their business came and recreated themselves with the jolly singing and suppers of the Back Kitchen; squads of young apprentices and assistants—the shutters being closed over the scene of their labours—came hither, for fresh air doubtless; rakish young medical students, gallant, dashing, what is called loudly dressed, and, must it be owned? somewhat dirty, came here, smoking and drinking and vigorously applauding the songs; young University bucks were to be found here too, with that indescribable simper which is only learned at the knees of Alma Mater; and handsome young guardsmen, and florid bucks from the St. James's Street clubs; nay, senators—English and Irish—and even members of the House of Peers." Thackeray goes on to say that all these sorts and conditions of men assembled to hear a bass singer named Hodgen, who had made an immense hit with his song of the "Body-snatcher." The singer from whom Hodgen was drawn was a man named Ross, and the song which he sang and which had the enormous success which Thackeray describes was called "Sam Hall," the chant of a murderous chimney-sweep of that name just before his execution. It was a good bit of realistic acting: the man, made up with a ghastly face, delivered it sitting across a chair,

and there was a horrible anathematizing *refrain*. The effect produced was tremendous, and for months and months, at the hour when it was known that "Sam Hall" would be sung, there was no standing-place in the Cider Cellars. When I first knew the place its landlord was William Rhodes, brother of the Coal Hole proprietor; but he died before the "Sam Hall" mania, and the person who profited by that was his widow, a clever managing woman, who conducted the general business with great success. The entertainment provided was of the same class as at the Coal Hole: in the early days I remember a comic singer named Pennikett, another named Labern; later on, a man named Moody, who sang well and gave excellent imitations.

But of all these places the most celebrated, undoubtedly, in its time, and the most likely to be remembered hereafter, was Evans's, at the western corner of the Covent Garden Piazza, under the building which was then an hotel and is now the New Club. This room, as well as the Coal Hole, has figured as the "Cave of Harmony" in Thackeray's writings; to it little Grigg conducts Mr. Spec—"So we went through the Piazza, and down the steps of that well-remembered place of conviviality"—in the course of their "night's pleasure," and there they encounter Bardolph of Brasenose. "Evans's late Joy's" was the unintentionally punning inscription on the lamp when I first knew it; but even then Evans had departed, and the presiding spirit was John, better known as "Paddy," Green—a worthy fellow, who had been a chorus-singer at the Adelphi, and whose courtesy and good temper won him vast popularity. For the first few years of my acquaintance with it the concert-room was small and low-pitched, with a bit added on at right angles at its extreme end. But even then it had a good reputation for music. John Binge the tenor, S. A. Jones the basso, the host himself, were well known as singers; Herr von Joel—a queer old German, who sang *jödling* ditties, played tunes on what he called a "vokingshteeck," and gave capital imitations of the birds and beasts of a farmyard—was a great attraction;

while the comic element, as supplied by Sharp and Sam Cowell, was unapproachable elsewhere. No man in my recollection, as a broadly comic vocalist, has been such a favourite as was J. W. Sharp: at Vauxhall and Cremorne in the summer, at public dinners in the winter, and at Evans's always, he was fully employed. But he fell into bad ways, took to drinking, lost his engagements, and was finally found *dead from starvation* on a country road. Cowell was an actor as well as a singer, and had a certain amount of success on the stage.

It was in this small room that Bardolph of Brasenose signalled his desire for more drink by whack-whacking with the pewter noggin, and that Thackeray heard the sentimental and the piratical ballad which he parodied so deliciously. After a time a change took place in the style of entertainment: all ribald songs—and often Evans's had been quite as profane as its rivals—were stopped for ever, and the choruses were sung by trained young lads, whose sweet fresh voices were heard with charming effect in the old glees and madrigals. The little room was too small for the audience; it was pulled down, and a vast concert-room built on its site, with a stage where the singers stood, and an annexe—a comfortable kind of hall, hung with theatrical portraits, etc.—where conversation could be carried on, and it was by no means necessary to listen to the music.

The public thronged to the concert-room—there was a private supper-room in the gallery, looking down on the hall through a *grille*, where ladies could hear the songs and could see without being seen—and the annexe became, and continued for several years, a popular resort for men-about-town. Thackeray was constantly there; Serjeant Murphy, Serjeant Ballantine, Jerrold, Lionel Lawson; sometimes Sala, Hannay, and some of the younger men; Albert and Arthur Smith, fresh from the "Show"; Horace Mayhew, very occasionally Leech. Chops and potatoes—never to be equalled—were the ordinary supper; as Mrs. Prig says, "the drinks was all good;" and some of the smartest talk in London was to be heard at Evans's about the

years '58 to '60, when the old night clubs had ceased to be, and the present ones had not been thought of. Through concert-room and annexe Paddy Green wandered, snuff-box in hand, God-blessing his "dear boys"—*i.e.*, every one to whom he spoke—and getting more and more maudlin as the night wore on. He prospered for many years and ought to have made a fortune; but he did not, and the introduction of music-halls, where women formed the larger portion of the audience, was the signal for his downfall.

A favourite resort for young men was "Gliddon's Divan," next door to Evans's, a tobacconist's with a large smoking-room attached, kept by one Tom Kilpack, a quiet little man who, in those days, sold a very decent cigar for 3d. An American bowling alley was afterwards established here.

One other place of public entertainment, though neither singing nor supper house, must be mentioned here. The Garrick's Head was a large tavern in Bow Street, facing Covent Garden Theatre; its landlord was one Renton Nicholson, a clever, versatile, wholly unprincipled fellow, who had been connected with the turf, connected with the stage, had owned and edited an atrociously blackguard weekly journal called *The Town*, and at the Garrick's Head had instituted a new kind of dramatic performance, in which he played the principal character. The entertainment was called "The Judge and Jury Society," and was a parody on the proceedings in those law-courts where actions of a certain character were tried; was presided over by Nicholson himself as the Lord Chief Justice, in full wig and gown; the case being argued out by persons dressed as, and in some instances giving also imitations of, leading barristers, and the witnesses being actors of more or less versatility and mimetic ability. The whole affair was written and arranged by Nicholson, who deported himself on the bench with the most solemn gravity, the contrast between which and his invariable speech on taking his seat—"Usher! get me a cigar and a little brandy-and-water"—was the signal for the first laugh. The entertainment was undoubtedly clever, but was so full of gross-

ness and indecency, expressed and implied, as to render it wholly disgusting. In the window of the tavern was a large painting representing the mock trial, with Nicholson on the bench, and all the celebrities of the day ranged round the room: underneath this picture was a set of verses, supposed to have been written in honour of the place by Tom Moore, and beginning, as I recollect:

> "O, where can you better enjoy your late glasses
> Than under that fane, where the genius of wit
> Illumines each grain of our sand as it passes?" etc.

Among the amusements of my youth I must not forget my athletic exercises, from which I derived so much benefit and delight. I first rode in Rotten Row—having made previous experiments at Brighton—in the year 1849, on a horse hired for the season from Peter Howden, job-master, of York Terrace Mews; the yard is there still, though Peter's last job—a black one—was long since done. With very little intermission, I have ridden there every succeeding year up to the present. I began rowing on the Thames in the year 1847, and continued the practice, off and on, until the year 1878, when I changed my skiff into a steam-launch. In the early days I and two Post Office colleagues had a randan gig built for us by Searle of Putney, where, under the charge of the head man, Miller, we used to keep her. Our usual evening's pull was up to Richmond—if we had time—and back to the White Hart at Mortlake, kept by old Toton, where we had supper off ham and eggs and shandy-gaff.

I was also exceedingly fond of sparring, which I learned first from old Nat Langham, in an empty room of a tavern in the Strand, where the barracks of the Commissionaires now are, and afterwards from young Alec Keene, a mighty pretty fighter. I never had much science, but being strong and very long in the reach, and being able to take a good amount of "punishment," I was rather an awkward customer. Years after I had given up the gloves, I was looking on at a wrestling exhibition

in Leicester Square, and was thinking how savagely it was conducted, and what frightful concussions the thrown men received, when I felt my arm touched by Alec Keene, whom I had not seen for ages, but who said, with a smile, "You and I used to knock each other about at one time, Mr. Yates, but I don't think we could either of us have stood much of this!"

CHAPTER V.

THE DRAMA IN THOSE DAYS.

1847—1852.

THE number of theatres in London in the present year of grace is, according to that excellent authority on all dramatic matters, the *Era Almanack*, thirty-seven; in the year 1847 it was thirteen, including HER MAJESTY'S and COVENT GARDEN, which were both devoted to Italian opera, and the ST. JAMES'S, where, during the brief season in which it was open, French plays were performed by French players. In this number I reckon the transpontine SURREY and VICTORIA, and the suburban SADLER'S WELLS, but not the far-eastward PAVILION, nor the GRECIAN and BRITANNIA, which, though in existence, called themselves, in those days, "Saloons"; indeed, the former was then still known as the Eagle Tavern. The theatres of which I speak were HER MAJESTY'S, COVENT GARDEN, DRURY LANE, HAYMARKET, LYCEUM, PRINCESS'S, ADELPHI, OLYMPIC, ST. JAMES'S, SADLER'S WELLS, MARYLEBONE, SURREY, VICTORIA; and of these, according to my knowledge of them, I propose to speak in detail.

TO HER MAJESTY'S I had already been introduced in my schoolboy days by the kindly daughter of Mr. Williams, a friend of my mother's, and a partner in Cockburn's Bank, at the corner of Whitehall Place, where she kept her bank account. This worthy lady, herself passionately fond of music, imagined everyone else must be in a similar condition; but though I was glad enough to accompany her, the chief attractions to me then were the lights and the company; later on, the charms of the *ballet* asserted their sway.

The opening of the season of '47 at HER MAJESTY'S was exceptionally dull; the great feud between Mr. Lumley, the lessee, and his conductor, Signor Costa, and principal singers, Madame Grisi and Signor Mario, had been followed by the secession of the best part of the *troupe*, and the conversion of COVENT GARDEN THEATRE into an opera-house, under the management of Messrs. Delafield and Gye. "Bones," boxes, and general admissions were to be had for the asking at HER MAJESTY'S, until the appearance—long heralded and eagerly expected—of Mdlle. Jenny Lind, in the early days of May, had an immediate effect in not merely restoring the failing fortunes of the theatre, but brought with it an amount of pecuniary success hitherto unknown.

I do not know how I could have received a hint of the importance of that *début*, for I certainly was not in any musical circle—I suppose I derived my impression from the general talk; but it is certain that I made up my mind to be present on the night when Mdlle. Jenny Lind should make her first bow to the English public, and equally certain that I carried out my intention. Every retainable seat had been retained for weeks; that made no difference to me—even a place in the pit was beyond my small means; but I was young and strong and active, and at a few minutes before noon on Tuesday, the 4th May, I took my place among twenty persons then gathered round the gallery-door of the opera-house in the Haymarket.

The twenty soon swelled into two hundred, into five hundred, into uncountable numbers; and there we stood, swaying hither and thither, joking, chaffing, panting, groaning, until the doors were opened at 7 P.M., and away we went with a rush. I had brought some sandwiches and a pocket-flask with me, and was in good condition luckily; for anything like that crowd I have never experienced. There were women amongst us, and just as I neared the door I heard a feeble whisper in my ear, "For God's sake, help me! I'm fainting!" I could not move my arms, which were pinioned to my sides, but I turned my head as best I could, and said, "Catch hold of me, and I'll

pull you up." The woman—I never saw her face—put her arms round my waist—I had a waist in those days—and, thus burdened, I struggled on. I reached and mounted the staircase; I put my hand, with the exact admission money in it, into the hole in the pay-box, whence at first it was swept out, with a score of other hands, by the maddened money-taker; but I succeeded: I got my pass-check, and, still burdened, I fought to the top of the staircase, where my check was demanded. It was then discovered that my unfortunate passenger had not paid her money, and had received no check. She released me; she was refused admittance, and was literally carried off on the human tide. I heard no more of her. When I reached my goal—the third row in the gallery—I sat down there, perspiring and exhausted, and, following the example of all round me, I took off my coat. The first notes of the overture to *Robert le Diable* found the gallery in its shirt-sleeves; but we were clothed and in our right minds before the opera began.

The next time I heard Mdlle. Lind was from the same coign of vantage, about a month later, on her first appearance in *Norma*, and, as this performance was attended by the Queen in state, I had equal difficulty in getting in. This was the first pageant I had ever beheld, and I perfectly remember the gorgeous appearance of the Royal box, with the Beefeaters on the stage below. The performance itself was unquestionably a failure: the adherents of the theatre tried to talk about a "new reading" of the character of the Druidical priestess; but the public would have none of it; and it was generally allowed that Grisi's Norma remained untouched.

Of Mdlle. Jenny Lind's extraordinary and unequalled success here and in America, of her quarrel with Mr. Bunn, of her domestic virtues and social triumphs, there is no need to say more in these pages. She had two admirable supporters in the sweet-voiced Gardoni and the splendid Lablache; but, with two exceptions, the operatic *troupe* was weak. It was to his *ballet* that Mr. Lumley looked for his principal attraction, independently of Jenny Lind.

And well he might; for surely neither before nor since was that style of entertainment brought to such a pitch of perfection. I have seen the famous *pas de quatre* danced by Taglioni, Cerito, Carlotta Grisi, and Lucille Grahn, the last one of the tallest of women, but extraordinarily graceful. I have seen more than a score of times—for it was my favourite *ballet—Esmeralda*, with Carlotta Grisi, bright, audacious, supple, and *piquante* to a degree, with Perrot—a little, ugly, pock-marked man, but a marvellous pantomimist—as Pierre Gringoire. The witchery of a *pas* called *La Truandaise*, as danced by this couple, is quite inexpressible. Mdlle. Plunkett, sister of Madame Doche, the French actress, was also a famous dancer of those days.

This was the first season of the ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA HOUSE, into which old COVENT GARDEN THEATRE had been metamorphosed, and the rivalry between it and the lyric establishment in the Haymarket was intense. It may be said generally that HER MAJESTY'S was supported by the older, the ROYAL ITALIAN by the younger, section of opera-goers; and I remember it was the fashion of the younger men to wear, in evening dress, black ties, in contrast to the large double-folded white cravats which were *de rigueur* at the Haymarket house.* What productions were those under Costa's *bâton*, and with the executants whom he had lured from their old allegiance! So long as I live I shall, I suppose, remember my first experience of *Lucrezia Borgia*, with Grisi's entrance on the gondola, the sleeping Mario, the "Com' e bello," the *trio* between these two and Tamburini, Orsini's drinking-song as interpreted by Alboni,

* As I was revising this chapter in proof I received a letter from Captain Dawson Damer, who says: "I have lost an old friend in Hayward. I only heard from him a short time ago; it was in regard to 'white ties.' I asked him when they came into fashion. He replied, 'One night, about 1850 (?), about the very last night of Vauxhall, the elder Miss Berry, *aged eighty-five*, Horace Walpole's flame, asked me to escort her there, and she suddenly, on entering the Gardens, looked at my white tie, and she said to me, "The last time I was here I came with Beau Brummell, who wore a white neckcloth for the first time; and it attracted much notice, and there rose an inquiry whether B. B. had taken orders."'"

and the horror of the *finale*. What a company! In addition to these, Madame Persiani, Signor Ronconi, Tagliafico; later on, Formes, whom I recollect as sexton at Mühlheim am Ruhr, not far from Düsseldorf, Madame Dorus Gras, Miss Catherine Hayes, M. Massol, Mdlle. Angri, and Mdlle. de Méric. The London world went quite mad over the production of *Les Huguenots*, almost as mad over the production of *Le Prophète*, in which, by the way, roller-skating was first introduced.

At DRURY LANE, in my boyish days, English opera, composed by Balfe or Wallace and written by Alfred Bunn, had been the great attraction, and often had I listened to Miss Rainforth's narration of her dream of dwelling in marble halls, Miss Romer's charming voice, Mr. Harrison's reedy tenor, and Mr. Borrani's (*né* Borrigan) nasal baritone, his songs, "The heart bowed dowd" and "Hear be, gentle Baritada," being favourite subjects of imitation among the musical young men. But at the time of which I write, DRURY LANE was almost wholly given up to the great Jullien, whose Promenade Concerts were by far the greatest success of their day: a little man, with a pale face and bright beady eyes, always at night elaborately dressed, with a worked shirt-front and huge white waistcoat and turned-back cuffs. He had been, according to some, a waiter at a *café*, according to others, a bandsman in a regiment; but all were agreed that he was a charlatan. *That* was visible to every naked eye in his puffs and programmes, in his posters and advertising vans, in the manner in which he led his musicians—dancing a-tiptoe, softly soothing, with outstretched palm, wildly exciting with whirling *bâton*, driving to fury with maniacal gesticulation, then, spent and exhausted, falling back, panting and breathless, into his gilded chair.

He *was* a charlatan, I will admit; but as a man—I knew him well—he was kindly, cheery, generous, and loyal, and as a musician he was perhaps the greatest benefactor this country has ever had; for to him, more than to anyone else, is to be ascribed the popularizing of music among the English people. To this end he got together a splendid band—which, for

numbers and excellence, at that time had never been equalled, and since has never been excelled—wherein Kœnig played the cornet, Richardson the flute, Lazarus the clarionet, Gratton Cooke the oboe, Baumann the bassoon, and Prospère the ophicleide; engaged solo-singers, foremost among them being Mdlle. Jetty Treffz, whose ballad, "Trab, trab," created a *furore*, and Miss Dolby; solo instrumentalists like Sivori and Vieuxtemps. Jullien's own polkas and valses—the "Olga" and the "Bridal," the "Row" and "Drum" polkas, the "British Army Quadrilles"—and Kœnig's. "Post-horn Galop," were commonplace enough, no doubt; but they took the taste of the town. *L'appétit venait en mangeant;* and when the public was ready for it, Jullien provided, from time to time, a better kind of musical pabulum.

The regular annual series of concerts was invariably wound up by a *bal masqué*, which was conducted with more spirit than is usually to be found in England in connection with such an affair. One of the principal promoters of fun was Horace Mayhew, who, dressed in a Robespierre garb, and accompanied by some of his brothers and a select band of followers, pervaded the *salle*. His English chaff and French *badinage* were equally fluent and excellent, full of fun, without the least coarseness, and his presence was a looked-for and welcome feature of the entertainment. Hitherto masquerades in England had been very ghastly gatherings: the solemn Charles the Seconds, Spanish noblemen, Leporellos, knights in armour, friars, and bewigged barristers had been supplemented by a would-be comic crew of clowns, pantaloons, and "romps"—young females in short petticoats, with hoops or skipping-ropes, with which they belaboured the bystanders. Under Jullien's *régime*—or rather under Mr. F. Gye's, for the arrangements were under the superintendence of that gentleman—all these objectionable characters were excluded, and the *bal masqué* became so much of an institution as to be described in all its ramifications in a very smartly written shilling book, in that style of which *The Gent* was the precursor, professedly written

by "the Count Chicard," but really, I imagine, the work of Horace Mayhew.

In the year 1847, however, M. Jullien undertook for himself at DRURY LANE a far more ambitious task—nothing less than the production of operas in English, on a far more complete scale than had been yet attempted, and supported by artists hitherto unknown to the English public. In the beginning of December he carried his project into effect with infinite spirit. His band, under the direction of the famous Hector Berlioz, was excellent, and the chorus, probably the largest and the most complete ever heard in an English theatre, was admirably disciplined and under perfect control. The first production was *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and the next day the town was ringing with the praises of the new tenor, Mr. Sims Reeves, who had proved himself more than worthy of the great expectations which had been raised concerning him. I perfectly recollect the tumultuous roars of applause evoked by his great scene at the end of the second act, and have a remembrance of roars of another kind, occasioned by the very comic manner in which, under the influence of great excitement, he persisted in shaking his head. His "Fra poco"—rendered, I remember, "From these fond arms they tore thee"—was enormously effective; and when the curtain fell, Mr. Sims Reeves was enrolled as a first favourite with the public, which for more than thirty-five years has never deserted him. Another successful *début* of that night was that of Mr. Whitworth as Colonel Ashton—a handsome man, whom I see about London to this day. I am afraid that the poor Mons., as *Punch* used to call him, from the way in which he always heralded himself on his posters, "Mons. Jullien," came to financial grief over his English opera experiment. It did not, if I remember rightly, last very long, though during its course he produced without much success a new opera of his own composition called *Peter the Great*, as well as various standard works.

And then DRURY LANE fell back into being a home for any kind of entertainment, no matter what. In a very smartly

written *brochure*, Charles Mathews once called it a huge theatrical omnibus; and so it was. What have I seen and heard within its walls? Franconi's circus *troupe*, with Caroline and Mathilde in the *haute école*, and the fascinating Palmyre Anato in the "leap of streamers," which used to draw all the youth of London; German opera, with Pischek; James Anderson's *régime;* Shakespeare, with the manager, Vandenhoff, and lovely Miss Laura Addison; *Azael the Prodigal*, a tolerably close version of the Scripture story, in which John Cooper played a high priest with much pompous unction; and *Ingomar:* Mr. James Anderson, a manly and vigorous actor, one of Macready's favourite lieutenants, being still alive, a hale and hearty gentleman.

Charles Mathews himself, all his delicate *finesse* and admirable byplay swallowed up in the enormous stage, played engagements here under the management of Mr. E. T. Smith: a strange person, said to have been originally a policeman, a shrewd, uneducated, good-natured vulgarian, of a dreadful back-slapping, Christian-name calling familiarity, who in his time entered on theatrical lesseeship on a large and varied scale. The days when Halliday was the stock author of the house; the production of *The Great City*, partly plagiarized from *Great Expectations; Amy Robsart* and dramatic versions of the Waverley novels, in which the lovely Adelaide Neilson was the great attraction: successive seasons of Italian opera: the Chatterton dynasty: finally, after the "marvellous boy" had "perished in his pride," the advent of Mr. Augustus Harris, who seems to be more capable or more fortunate than any of his predecessors.

I forgot to mention the great *Monte Cristo* row, which occurred at DRURY LANE in the summer of 1848, and at which I was present. The *troupe* of the Théâtre Historique from Paris were announced for a short series of performances, but on the opening night a band of opponents took possession of the pit, and prevented a syllable being heard throughout the evening. The riot was renewed the next night, and one of the

leaders of the malcontents being arrested, proved to be Sam Cowell, an actor and comic singer already mentioned. There was a good deal of free fighting, and as one of the incidents I remember a huge strawberry pottle being hurled at Albert Smith, who had just issued a sixpenny book called *A Pottle of Strawberries*, and who was conspicuously active on the side of the Frenchmen.

My experience of good acting and sound English comedy is more due to the HAYMARKET than to any other theatre. As a boy I had seen there *London Assurance*, *Old Heads and Young Hearts*, *Time Works Wonders*, *Bubbles of the Day*, and *Money*, played by old William Farren, Strickland, David Rees, James Vinning, Walter Lacy, Webster, Charles Mathews, Harley, James Anderson, and Macready; Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Nisbett, Miss P. Horton, and Madame Vestris. On my return to England in 1847, Mr. Webster, the lessee, very kindly placed my name on his free list, and for years I went to his theatre once or twice a week. Not to the dress-circle, though: there was no entrance money to be paid, but for a seat in the dress or upper circle. I should have had to tip a box-keeper, and I could not afford that. So I used to scurry up the stairs to the "slips," in those days a row of seats on either side the house on the gallery level, and from the slips of the old HAYMARKET Theatre, before the Bancroft renovation, I have seen some of the finest acting of my day.

Comedies, for instance: Mrs. Nisbett as Constance in *The Love Chase*, with Webster as Wildrake, and Mrs. Glover as Widow Green. This was on the occasion of Mrs. Nisbett's return to the stage, after the death of her second husband, Sir William Boothby. She was a very lovely woman of the ripe-peach style, large eyes and pouting lips. One night, about this time, I went behind the scenes, and was presented to her by my mother, "Lady Boothby, this is my boy!" "How wonderfully like his father!" and her ladyship inclined her lovely face and gave me a kiss. "Lucky fellow," said Webster, who was standing by; "you'll remember in after-years that you've kissed

Mrs. Nisbett!" "I've forgotten it already," I said, lifting up my face for a reminder. Mrs. Nisbett laughed and acceded; and Webster, turning to her so that my mother could not hear, muttered, "*Very* like his father."

Farces, with the inimitable and yet perpetually imitated Buckstone as their hero. *Lend Me Five Shillings*, with Mrs. L. S. Buckingham, the dashing creature for whose cab Buckstone could not find the fare, and Tilbury, the old gentleman from whom he wished to borrow it, and who "*thought* he had change for a 100,000*l.* note;" *Spring Gardens*, *To Paris and Back*, and a host of others.

There I first saw the Charles Keans in *The Wife's Secret*, one of the best acting plays of modern days, with Webster as the steward and Mrs. Keeley as the waiting-maid; in a most preposterous piece called *Leap Year*, in which Kean, the hero, to win his love, disguised himself as a footman in livery, and spouted Coleridge's "Geneviève"; and in Shakespeare. Webster, the manager, was the hero of the *The Roused Lion*, in which a *beau* of the old school, roused into competition with a coxcomb of the new, exhibits in every point his superiority; of *Lavater;* and of *The Serious Family*, a rendering of *Le Mari à la Campagne*, which afterwards served Mr. Burnand as the groundwork of his *Colonel.* The wife, in this piece, was played by Miss Reynolds, one of the most delightful actresses of our time, whether in comedy or, *teste The Invisible Prince*, in burlesque.

The Irish Major in *The Serious Family* was the famous James Wallack, in his day untouchable as a romantic actor, handsome, gallant, dashing, almost an English Fechter, without the fascinating earnestness in love-making, but with a strong dash of humour, which Fechter, on the stage, never showed. Wallack's Don Cæsar de Bazan was a splendid performance, so was his Brigand, and his Rover in *Wild Oats.* I have seen him attempt Othello with but a small amount of success, but he was a fair Iago and a most admirable Benedick.

Then there were the delightful Keeleys, with their combined

efforts in such farces as *Dearest Elizabeth* and the *Pas de Fascination*, and Keeley's stolid comicality in such burlesques as *The Sphinx* and *Camaralzaman*, in which he had the assistance of Miss Reynolds's sweet voice and charming presence, and Mr. James Bland's magnificent pomposity. An actor of Irish characters named Hudson, gentlemanly, but of somewhat thin humour, was a light of the HAYMARKET in those days.

My earliest recollection of the LYCEUM is under the management of the Keeleys, when with their daughter Miss Mary Keeley, Miss Louisa Fairbrother (Mrs. Fitzgeorge), Miss Woolgar, Messrs. Emery, Wigan, Frank Matthews, Leigh Murray, Oxberry, and Collier. Those were the days of the dramatization of Dickens's books: *Martin Chuzzlewit*, with Keeley as Mrs. Gamp and his wife as Bailey, F. Matthews a wonderful Pecksniff, Emery an excellent Jonas; *The Cricket on the Hearth*, with Mrs. Keeley as Dot, Keeley as Caleb Plummer, Emery as Peerybingle, and Mary Keeley's *début* as Bertha; of the sparkling burlesques concocted by Albert Smith and Tom Taylor, while Charles Kenney would sit by and occasionally throw in a joke or a suggestion: *Aladdin*, where Keeley played the magician, and imparted such peculiar emphasis to the line, "Yes! here's the place, and there's the blasted cedar!" as to bring down the house; *Ali Baba*, with Miss Fairbrother as the leader of the Forty Thieves; *Valentine and Orson*, Mrs. Keeley as the Knight, her husband the Wild Man; and others. Shirley Brooks won his dramatic spurs here with an excellent melodrama, *The Creole*—the hero finely played by Emery, a most excellent actor, never sufficiently appreciated—and a novel and sparkling farce, *The Wigwam*.

When my regular playgoing days began, the LYCEUM had passed into the hands of Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris, who had a brilliant reign there. Their opening pieces fell flat, but within a few weeks two new farces were produced which filled the house and have proved perennial favourites: they were *Box and Cox* and *The Rough Diamond*. Buckstone and Harley were the original printer and hatter; but though

every comedian for the last thirty-five years has played the farce, I have never seen so thoroughly artistic a conception of Box as that of Charles Mathews, who took the part when Harley left the theatre. Mrs. Fitzwilliam's Margery, in *The Rough Diamond*, has never been surpassed. Shirley Brooks was also successful here with a smart one-act comedy called *Anything for a Change*, with Charles Mathews and a Miss "Polly" Marshall, who played a servant-girl inimitably. And when my mother joined the company in 1848 there was a capital revival of *The Critic*, with her as Tilburina, Charles Mathews, Frank Matthews, Selby, Roxby, and F. Cooke.

A farce called *An Appeal to the Public* was memorable to me, as in it I made my first appearance on any stage. A crowd was gathered under an archway in supposed shelter from rain: one night I "went on" and stood among the people; but Charles Mathews spying me, rushed up, exclaiming, "What! young Mr. Yates!" dragged me to the footlights, hoped I had not got wet, and dismissed me. This was the time when Planché, staunchest supporter of Madame Vestris, and founder of her fortunes in her early managerial career at the OLYMPIC, again came to her help, and produced a series of extravaganzas, the most noteworthy of which were *The King of the Peacocks* and *The Island of Jewels*. These, with the scenery painted by William Beverly, then new to London and in the plenitude of his power, and admirably acted, proved highly attractive. They served to introduce two young actresses to the London stage, Miss Julia St. George and Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam. Both were successful, but Miss Fitzwilliam, daughter of an old public favourite, achieved quite an extraordinary success by her charming manner and most effective singing: she certainly did not "lag superfluous," as in the height of her triumph she married, and retired from the boards.

These, too, were the times of Charles Mathews's greatest successes: *The Day of Reckoning*, in which he for the first time attempted a serious character, the second being when he

played in the dramatised version of my novel, *Black Sheep;* Blanchard Jerrold's admirable piece, *Cool as a Cucumber*, which, done into French, as *L'Anglais Timide*, was afterwards played by Mathews in Paris; and, best of all, *The Game of Speculation*, adapted by G. H. Lewes, under the name of Slingsby Laurence, from *Mercadet*, possibly the most suitable character ever written for Charles Mathews, and in the acting of which he absolutely revelled. Much was expected from a drama which followed, *The Chain of Events;* but it was not successful, proving, as Douglas Jerrold said of it, "a door-chain, to keep people out of the house!"

The PRINCESS'S, at the time when I first knew it, and for many years after, was under the management of a Hebrew gentleman, whose name appeared at the head of his playbills as J. M. Maddox, and whose short stout figure and very marked features, with a cigar always protruding from under his prominent nose, was a constant source of delight to the caricaturists. His real cognomen was, I imagine, Medex—at least that was the name painted over a tobacconist's shop immediately facing the theatre, which was avowedly kept by the lessee's brother, and there, seated on a tub or lounging against the counter, Mr. Maddox was constantly to be found. And not merely to the caricaturist, but to the anecdote-monger, was the Hebrew *impresario* of much service. Stories of his wonderful fertility of resource in saving money were rife in theatrical circles. Among other things, it was said that all the lighter pieces produced at the PRINCESS'S were the work of a jobbing author, who was kept on the premises—some said chained by the leg to his desk—who for a small salary was compelled to produce two French translations weekly. Some of the stories were introduced by Albert Smith into one of his novels, in which Maddox figured; and the manager took his revenge by getting the jobbing author to write a parody, satirising his assailant as "The Fine Young Modern Dramatist." It was rather smartly done, as may be judged from the one verse which lives in my memory:

"'Albata' Smith they've christened him, for wicked wags have said
That as Albata now is used for silver plate instead,
So he has stolen the genuine wit that's found in Dickens' head,
And for it substituted his own literary lead—
Like a fine young modern dramatist,
All of the present time."

All were theatrical fish that came to Mr. Maddox's net: opera, farce, tragedy, comedy, ballet, and pantomime, he tried them all. On my earliest visit to the PRINCESS'S I saw a little opera called *The Barcarole*, with a very sweet tenor named Allen, a well-known baritone, Leffler, and a man named Walton, whom I have never heard of since, but who remains in my memory from an odd trick of twiddling his thumbs, and the manner in which he repeated a name, "Cafferini." I saw soon after Mrs. Butler, now known as Mrs. Fanny Kemble, as Julia in *The Hunchback*, and conceived, rightly or wrongly, a dislike to her acting. Here, too, I had my one remembered experience of Macready—I know my father took me as a child to COVENT GARDEN to see *Macbeth*, but that is wholly indistinct—as *Othello*, but I was not much impressed. Miss Cushman, whom I was to meet twenty-five years later in America, was the Emilia, and everyone was talking of the extraordinary resemblance in face, voice, and manner between the two. Mr. Maddox relied greatly on the attraction of operas in English, and brought out several stars of a certain magnitude: a Mdlle. Nau was the first *prima donna* of my recollection; but there were also the charming Madame Anna Thillon, whose performance in the *Crown Diamonds* created a furore about this time, and young Miss Louisa Pyne, then a *débutante*. Mr. Harrison, afterwards to be associated with her in operatic management, and Mr. and Mrs. Weiss were stars among the company. Charles Mathews and his wife, Keeley and his wife, and Alfred Wigan were occasional visitors in those times to the PRINCESS'S, which, for its pantomime season, had the advantage of an extremely agile—but to me wholly unhumorous—clown, named Flexmore, who, with his wife, Mdlle. Auriol, daughter of another famous clown, proved highly attractive.

And here, too, under the Maddox *régime*, was a very strange man, Charles Kerrison Sala, brother of the author, largely endowed with the family talent, and with more than an average supply of the family eccentricity. One of his peculiarities, and one which he carried out with the strictest rigour, was never to be seen in public without a flower in his button-hole; winter or summer, night or day, there was the flower, valuable or valueless, but always present. To the general public he was little known, though, under his theatrical name of Wynn, he achieved a certain amount of success at the PRINCESS'S; but his quaint fancy and keen perception of the ludicrous were highly esteemed by his friends. He wrote a queer rambling poem called "The Fish," which was full of sparkling incongruity. But it is as the hero of two or three stock theatrical anecdotes that his memory will probably survive. One of these may be narrated. For some reason or other, Sala (Wynn) was most objectionable to Macready. Possibly want of reverence had something to do with the feeling; but the fact was that the great tragedian detested the eccentric actor. When at rehearsals Wynn appeared on the stage, Macready's eyes were tightly closed until he disappeared, when he would ask the prompter, "Has it gone?" Now, it happened that on the revival of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*, with Macready as Cardinal Wolsey, the part of Cardinal Campeius was allotted to Mr. Wynn. It had been represented to the manager that Mr. Macready's costume would be correct and splendid, more especially as regards some magnificent point-lace which he intended wearing, and it had been suggested that something extra should be done to make the other Cardinal respectable. But Mr. Maddox thought some old scarlet robes fudged up from the wardrobe would suffice; and as to point-lace, silver tissue paper, deftly snipped and sewn on, would have much the same appearance when viewed from a distance. At the dress rehearsal Macready, enthroned in a chair of state, had the various characters to pass before him: he bore all calmly until, clad in the scarlet robes bordered by silver tissue-paper, and wearing an enormous red hat, Wynn

approached. Then, clutching both arms of his chair and closing his eyes, the great tragedian gasped out, "Mother Shipton, by ——!"

Of course I was on the free list at the ADELPHI, where I not merely had the right of *entrée*, but generally managed to get passed into one of the small low private boxes immediately above the orchestra—I am speaking of the old house—where my presence frequently produced, to my intense delight, a more or less apposite remark from Wright, the low comedian. *The* low comedian, indeed, for never have I seen such a laughter-compelling creature: face, figure, manner, were irresistible; without uttering a word he would, across the footlights, give the audience a confidential wink, and send them into convulsions. In words and actions he was broad, sometimes to the verge of indecency, and to this baseness he was encouraged by a large portion of the audience; but when he chose there was no more genuinely and legitimately comic artist. He was essentially an Adelphi actor: made no mark before he came there, subsided into nothingness after he left. Wright first joined the Adelphi company in my father's management, played Dick Swiveller in the *Curiosity Shop*, Shotbolt the gaoler in *Jack Sheppard*, and gradually worked himself into prominence; but it was not until after my father's death, and under Mr. Webster's rule, that he assumed the position which he held so long. For many years he was the undoubted attraction to the theatre, and was paid and treated accordingly. Never have I heard such laughter as that which he evoked, never have I seen people so completely collapsed and exhausted by the mere effect of their mirth. In some of Wright's scenes in *The Green Bushes* I have fallen helpless, spineless, across the front of the box, almost sick with laughter. In this drama and *The Flowers of the Forest*, in his broad farces, *Did you ever Send your Wife to Camberwell? How to Settle Accounts with your Laundress*, and others of that calibre, he was riotously, preposterously, madly absurd; but there were other pieces I shall have to speak of, wherein he played with all the subtle resources of which the art is capable,

and where it would have been impossible to have exceeded the real merit of his impersonation.

Unlike his dramatic rivals, Keeley and Buckstone, both of whom were men of natural smartness and cleverness enhanced by education, Wright, save in his profession, was stupid, coarse, ignorant, and essentially common; undoubtedly, too, he was most at his ease when the scene admitted and the audience permitted his display of his coarseness and commonness on the stage; but he could rise to great artistic heights. Constantly associated with him on the stage, half-feeder, half-butt, was Mr. Paul Bedford, always in my time a big, jovial, red-faced, mellow-voiced, brainless comedian, but whom my mother remembered as a good-looking young man, a sweet tenor singer. Paul Bedford's size and rotundity, his odd utterances of slang sayings, his stolid imperviousness to the impertinence with which in the due course of all the dramas he was assailed by Wright, made him a favourite with the Adelphi public, and gave him a *raison d'être*. Had he lived later he would have been well placed in a music-hall, on the platform or in the chair. He had not the slightest claim to be considered an actor, played every part in exactly the same fashion, had not the faintest notion of impersonation, and was fundamentally stupid and ignorant. But in his earlier days he sang "Jolly Nose," and in later years he said "I believe you, my boy!" and these accomplishments, with his reputed jollity, his social reputation for full-flavoured anecdotes, and his position as Wright's professional butt, carried him successfully through a long life.

The entertainment provided at the ADELPHI scarcely ever varied: it commenced at seven o'clock with a melodrama in three acts, which was over before ten, after which there were a couple of farces. About nine, or as soon after as could be managed without too much disturbing the performance, the "half-price" was admitted—that is to say, a considerable reduction was accepted in the entrance-fee to the boxes and pit. In small theatres the half-price was a very important consideration

to the management; for money was not so rife in those days, and there were numberless young men who, while they would have been bored by spending the entire evening in the theatre, and would have grudged a large disbursement for a comparatively short amusement, were willing to pay the reduced price; so that though the drama was the staple portion of the entertainment, the supplementary farces were no mere affairs to fill up the bill, but had their own value and their own audience. The two most successful dramas of that time were *The Green Bushes* and *The Flowers of the Forest*, and both were written by Buckstone, who had succeeded so well in suiting my father and *his* ADELPHI company with dramas similar in style. Of that company there still remained, in 1847, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, my mother, Wright, P. Bedford, O. Smith, and Cullenford, the original Ralph Nickleby. They were supplemented by Miss Woolgar, a most charming and fascinating young lady, who soon became a great favourite; Charles Selby, a better dramatist than actor; Hughes, who was said to have somewhat resembled my father in his style; Lambert, "first old man"; Munyard, a very excellent second low comedian, who died young; Miss Ellen Chaplin; and Miss Emma Harding, who somewhat recently returned to London after a long absence in America, appearing as a spiritualistic medium.

Mr. Webster, busied as manager and actor at the Haymarket, had not much time to give to his new property; so he had installed Madame Celeste as his stage-directress, while what is known in theatrical parlance as "the front of the house"—*i.e.* supervision of the box-office, money-takers, check-takers, play-bills, treasury, etc.—was confided to my father's old friend and my guardian, Mr. Charles Manby, who, though entirely unconnected by birth and position—he was secretary of the Institute of Civil Engineers—with theatrical matters, seems to have always been mixed up in them. Celeste Elliott, popularly known as Madame Celeste, was a very extraordinary woman. Born in France, sent to America, married there, when quite young, to a man named Elliott—she arrived in this

country a pantomimist and dancer by profession; and played in a piece, in which she had no word to utter, called *The French Spy*. To the day of her death, only a year or two ago, her English was not merely broken, it was smashed into fragments; but by mere force of will and great popularity she for years caused herself to be accepted as an English-speaking actress, and to play the heroines in a London threatre. Early in life she obtained a great influence over Benjamin Webster, which, during all the long years of its duration, was never exercised, I believe, save for his good. Full of natural energy and resource, full of French excitement and *élan*, knowing all the "inside life" of her profession as one who has lived in it from childhood only can, of indomitable will and untiring working-power, she made a most admirable head of the ADELPHI establishment, which, under her direction, flourished abundantly.

Besides the Buckstone dramas which I have mentioned, "a real Adelphi success," as it used to be called on the bills, was achieved by *Title Deeds*, a play written by Mr. R. B. Peake, who had scored previous successes, and of whom Shirley Brooks used to tell a ridiculous *non sequitur* story: "Who do you say is the author of this farce?" asked an elderly playgoer; "Dicky Peake? Damned nonsense! he couldn't write a farce! *I knew his father!*"—by *The Harvest Home* and *The Hop-pickers*, by Mr. Parry; and by a version of the *Closerie des Genêts*, called *The Willow Copse*, in which Mr. Webster played with great effect. The extraordinarily attractive farces of *Did you ever Send your Wife to Camberwell? How to Settle Accounts with your Laundress*, etc., were the work of J. Stirling Coyne, an indefatigable Irishman, who, by the aid of a French dictionary, and a knowledge of the requirements of the stage and the tastes of a London audience, for a series of years provided managers with dramatic wares, more or less good, but nearly always popular. His broad farces, full of quaint verbal and practical jokes, were, taken for what they were, very amusing. Better and higher work was done by Mark Lemon in *Domestic*

Economy and *The School for Tigers*, in each of which farces Wright was provided with a fresh, thoughtful, natural bit of character, worked out by him with inimitable result. On these two farces, and another called *Who Lives at Number Nine?* and on his performance of Paul Pry, Wright's fame as a genuine comic actor will rest. Will rest, I say, forgetting that he is already forgotten! In those days the little ADELPHI was a popular and well-managed resort, its company was united, and there was a good deal of quiet fun and pleasant talk in the small and dingy green-room, hung round with portraits of the principal members. To me it was fairyland, and the memory of it is yet fresh in my mind.

I think it was to the old OLYMPIC that I was taken as a child by my father to see a strange man named George Wild in a strange piece called *The Artful Dodge*. It was either there or at the QUEEN'S, a dingy place off Tottenham Court Road, where, long before it was metamophosed by Miss Marie Wilton into the PRINCE OF WALES'S, I saw, in company with Dickens, a piece in which the First Napoleon reviewed the French army, consisting of three dirty youths and a vivandière, who, on the general's approach, presented arms, and saluted him with "Vive Emproo!" Certainly I have no remembrance of the OLYMPIC in its palmy days of Vestris and Planché: my first regular recollection is of going there to the pit, to see a man who had taken the town by storm as Othello. Gustavus Vaughan Brooke was his name, and he remains in my memory as the best representative of the character I have ever seen: manly, soldierly, with all Salvini's gallantry and pathos, without a suggestion of Salvini's repulsive violence, with a voice now capable of the softest modulation in love or pity, now trumpet-toned in command—such was G. V. Brooke when I first saw him. He soon dropped away, poor fellow!—became a heavy drinker, of stout and porter mostly, and lost his gallant bearing, and his voice grew thick and muddy; and, though he played for years afterwards—he went down in the *London*, a ship which foundered in the Bay of Biscay on her way to Australia, and

when last seen, after most strenuous exertions at the pumps, was leaning over the bulwarks, calmly awaiting his coming doom—he was virtually a lost man in his first season. Soon after his appearance I took my mother to see him, and she, with all her experience, was very much impressed by his powers. As for me, I was infatuated, haunted the theatre, and saw Brooke in all his characters—saw him in Sir Giles Overreach, where, in the last act, he was splendid; saw him in Hamlet, where, throughout, he must have been very bad.

I am not quite certain as to the way in which *Othello* was cast, but I think Stuart, known as the "caged lion," a fine old-crusted actor, full of mouthings and conventionalisms, was the Iago, and Stuart's daughter the Desdemona; and I have an idea of having seen Miss Glyn, afterwards a celebrated tragic actress, as Emilia. Leigh Murray was, I suppose, the Cassio: I know he was in the company, for he often used to talk to me of Brooke and bemoan his failings, with little idea, poor fellow! that he himself, a few years after, would fall into a worse state. Later on was produced a play called *The Headsman*, in which Leigh Murray played the *jeune premier*, and first attracted to himself the admiring attention of the public. It was from the pit of the old OLYMPIC, entrance to which I had cheerfully purchased for eighteenpence, that I became desperately enamoured of Mrs. Stirling, whose acquaintance I did not make for many years after, but whom I then worshipped with all the loyal devotion of seventeen. She was charming in everything; but in a little piece called *Time Tries All*, in which Leigh Murray also appeared, and where she spoke a smart epilogue, which I always used to consider specially addressed to me, she was more than delightful. In *The Eton Boy*, also with Leigh Murray, and with the mirthful addition of Compton, driest of comedians, in *Cousin Cherry*, and in many another little drama of that day, she won my youthful heart, which she has, naturally, retained ever since.

At the old OLYMPIC I saw a very clever man, named Lysander Thompson, in a kind of character—a rustic full-flavoured

Englishman, *e.g.*, Tyke in *The School of Reform*, such as was played by the elder Emery—that was very popular early in the century, but which has quite died out. I imagine Mr. Lysander Thompson was practically its last exponent. I saw him play Zekiel Homespun in *The Heir-at-Law*, but cannot remember one other person in the cast. But I perfectly well recollect the destruction by fire of the old theatre and the opening of the new one; for by that time, 1849, I was a member of the Garrick Club, and moving in "theatrical circles." The fire took place on the night when a small actor named Bender was about to take his benefit; and the new house, then thought remarkably pretty and commodious, was opened on one of the last nights of the year with a very strong company, among them Frank Matthews, Alfred Wigan, Compton, Meadows, Ryder, Mrs. Seymour, Mrs. A. Wigan, Mrs. Mowatt, Mr. Davenport, and Miss M. Oliver. The three last-mentioned artists came from the MARYLEBONE, where they had been playing under the management of Mr. Walter Watts, under whose auspices the new OLYMPIC had been built, and was to be managed.

Who was Mr. Walter Watts? Personally, a cheery, light-whiskered, pleasant little man, of convivial and champagne-supper-giving tendencies. *What* was he? Actors in those days were, as a rule, not very clear about business matters: they knew he was not an actor; they thought he was "something in the City." He was an excellent paymaster, very hospitable to all authors and critics, drove in a handsome brougham, and made elegant presents to the "leading ladies," whom he admired. "Something in the City," it was opined, must be a good berth. The position which Walter Watts really occupied in the City was that of a clerk in the Globe Insurance Office at a comparatively small salary, and the money on which he had lived in luxury and carried out his theatrical speculations was obtained by fraud. By ingenious alterations in the pass-books and ledgers, aided, one would imagine, by gross carelessness on the part of responsible officials, Watts, when discovered and arrested in April, 1850, had robbed his em-

ployers of upwards of 70,000*l.* There was some technical legal difficulty in framing the indictment against him, and he was actually convicted of stealing "a piece of paper." A point of law was reserved, but afterwards given against him; he was sentenced to ten years' transportation, but committed suicide the same night by hanging himself to the grating of his cell. He was the precursor of Robson and Redpath, both of whom swindled in a somewhat similar way, and on a similar gigantic scale.

In my early recollection the ST. JAMES'S was in the occupation of Mr. John Mitchell, the Bond Street librarian, and was devoted to the production of French plays by French actors. Through the interest of my guardian, Charles Manby, I had the *entrée* of the house, and constantly availed myself of the privilege. There I saw with special interest—for I had heard of a certain resemblance between him and my father—Frédéric Lemaître, even then no longer young, but full of vivacity and fire, with his high-pitched voice and odd distorted mouth, deeply impressive in *Le Docteur Noir*, delightfully comic in *L'Auberge des Adrets.* I have seen Lemaître in some of his best characters—in the *Trente Ans de la Vie d'un Joueur*, where his wonderful performance forms the subject of one of Dickens's letters; years afterwards in *Paillasse*, a personation of great pathos; and in *Ruy Blas*, where his age and physical disadvantages were counterbalanced by his genius. There, too, I saw Regnier, the first comedian of the Théâtre Français; and Lafont, who lived to be a great age, and looked and played inimitably to the last; and fascinating Mdlle. Rose Chéri, and Bouffé, a kind of refined Wright, in the *Gamin de Paris.* At the ST. JAMES'S I first became intimate with the late Charles Lamb Kenney, who in those days was assisting John Oxenford in the dramatic criticism of the *Times*, and who used to give me a seat in his box, where I passed the evening listening to his remarks on the play, and envying the lucky mortal who had sufficient talent to write in a newspaper! It was from the *Times* box that I first saw Rachel, by far the finest actress I

have ever seen. Her Camille in *Les Horaces*, her Phèdre, her Adrienne Lecouvreur, are as fresh in my memory as when I first saw them; and there was another play—was it called *Valérie?*—in which she sustained a double character. They talked of Ristori; they talk of Sarah Bernhardt: I have seen them both in their best *rôles*, but, to my mind, neither one nor the other is to be compared to Rachel.

My first visit to the STRAND was in very early days, when it was called "Punch's Playhouse," and the Keeleys were acting there; but beyond those facts I have no recollection of it. What I first clearly remember in connection with the little theatre is a dramatic version of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, with a clever jolly-looking man named H. Hall, who "doubled" the characters of Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp, and one Roberts, who made an excellent Tigg. Then I knew no more of it until it was in the hands of old William Farren, who, as an actor of old men, I have never seen surpassed on any stage. He had an excellent company—Mrs. Glover, who enjoyed great celebrity as an actress of old women; Mrs. Stirling, Compton, and Leigh Murray. For them Mark Lemon wrote an admirable drama called *Hearts are Trumps*, in which all were very well suited, and where Leigh Murray, who played an aristocratic villain, for the first time dared to represent a comparatively young man with grey hair, being made up, in fact, after the well-known "Jim" Macdonald. A version of *The Vicar of Wakefield* was also very successful; and a little comedy called *Poor Cousin Walter* was, I think, one of the earliest dramatic productions of my old friend Palgrave Simpson.

I am afraid my youthful admiration of Shakespeare and the legitimate drama was not sufficiently strong to carry me often to the remote regions of SADLER'S WELLS, a theatre which the pluck and energy of worthy Mr. Phelps had rescued from the lowest condition of a "penny gaff," and where the best plays were then presented in a fitting manner; but I well recollect seeing a performance of *The Tempest*, in which I was struck not so much by the manager's Prospero as by the Caliban of

Mr. George Bennett, which remains on my mind as a very grim fantastic impersonation. Nor did I much affect the MARYLEBONE while under Mrs. Warner's management, though I once went there to see the *Winter's Tale*. Later on, when the theatre passed into the hands of the peccant Watts, who leased it before he took the OLYMPIC, I was a more frequent visitor. For there was first introduced to an English public the fascinating Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt, an American actress, who was also a poetess and a very charming woman. With her was her compatriot, Mr. E. L. Davenport, who not merely played Shakespearean and other heroes, but actually dared to appear as a British sailor—William in *Black-eyed Susan*, a character created by the great "Tippy" Cooke. Mrs. Mowatt and Mr. Davenport were very popular, both here and at the OLYMPIC.

My reminiscences of the SURREY are a little mixed. I went there first when my father was playing a short summer engagement under Mr. Davidge's management. And my mother, in later years, used to speak of another engagement which they played at the SURREY, under the auspices of a Mr. Levi. This gentleman, it seems, one day asked my father what piece he proposed to produce next, and my father mentioning *The Admirable Crichton*, a version of Ainsworth's novel, which had been successful at the ADELPHI, Mr. Levi said, "That's a capital notion, *The Admiral Crichton;* and we've something in the wardrobe that'll just do for it! Jones, step up to the wardrobe, and fetch that admiral's uniform I bought last week!" When I visited the SURREY as a young man it was under the joint management of Mr. Shepherd and Miss Vincent, "the acknowledged heroine of domestic drama," as she used to be called in the bills, a lady whose great part was Susan Hopley, a virtuous servant-maid. On my being presented as the son of the late, etc., to Mr. Shepherd, that gentleman affably remarked, "Oh, indeed! glad to know you, sir! *Did your father leave your mother pretty well off?*"

These are my reminiscences of the theatres of my youth,

where some of my happiest hours were passed. I am not so much of a theatre-goer now, but I should be ungrateful indeed if I had aught but the kindliest feelings for the "player-folk," from whom I sprang, among whom I lived, and from whom I have received constant sympathy and consideration.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INFLUENCE OF "PENDENNIS."

1851—1853.

I AM afraid that my mother was a good deal disappointed at the non-fulfilment of the dream which she had imagined would be accomplished when I returned from Germany—a dream in which all the leisure portion of my life was to be passed in her company, and in improving my mind and making myself famous in some line not quite decided upon. She had plenty of sound common sense, and ought to have known the proneness of youth to give way to the temptations with which it is surrounded; but she seemed to have an idea that her one duckling was to be different from the rest of the brood; and when she found him perpetually immersed in the pond of pleasure, and never tired of diving down, loudly quacking his delight, upon any inducement to do so, she felt that the one hope of her later life was not destined to be realized.

Her reproaches were not very many, and certainly not very bitter. It had always been her desire that I should do something to distinguish myself in some profession—at the Bar, she had hoped; and when circumstances proved that such a career was impossible, she had accepted Lord Clanricarde's appointment with special gratitude, knowing as she did that the holding of a Government situation was by no mean incompatible with other employment—literary, for instance. Look at Charles Lamb in the India House; and there was Mr. Sam Anderson, an old friend of my father's, who was Registrar of something in Chancery Lane, and who had known Sir Walter Scott, and

written some convivial songs, and been introduced into Christopher North's *Noctes Ambrosianæ* under another name. Thus my dear mother, who always laughingly declared there was a great deal of Mrs. Nickleby in her, would prattle on, particularly lamenting that, on the rare occasions when I passed an evening at home, and invariably passed it in reading, I should indulge in the perusal of such very light literature, instead of devoting myself to the acquisition of a store of valuable information.

She had read somewhere that Sir Walter Scott had said the curse of his life had been his "desultory reading." I cannot tell whence she obtained this remarkable declaration. I have never found it in Lockhart's *Life;* and it seems exactly the opposite of what Scott would have said, and what must have been the truth. But that was my mother's text, and on it she preached many a simple sermon.* Very different in her treatment of the same subject was my godmother, a worthy old spinster lady whom I have mentioned as living with us. "What with his *Pickwick* and his *Punch*"—these were the works always selected as typical of my studies—she would remark, with great asperity, "I wonder the boy hasn't softening of the brain! I'm only sorry my uncle Beilby is not alive to give him a good talking to!" "My uncle Beilby," who figured perpetually in the old lady's conversation under this guise or as "the dear Bishop," was Dr. Beilby Porteous, a former diocesan of London, whose portrait hung on our dining-room wall, and whose name was to me *anathema maranatha* from the manner in which it was always being held up to me as precept and example.

Although the pursuit of pleasure was at that time my most chosen avocation, and although both *Pickwick* and *Punch* had a full share of my admiration, the old lady's sarcastic condemnation of my literary tastes was far too sweeping. I had

* I was wrong, and my mother was right. The statement is to be found in Sir Walter's Autobiography prefixed to Lockhart's *Life* (second edition, in 10 vols., 1839, p. 52).

become John Baker's pupil then, and was well grounded in English poetry and standard prose. In those days Macaulay's History was creating much excitement and discussion, and I had brought it back from one of my visits to the Continent, in, I am ashamed to say, a Tauchnitz edition, and was completely fascinated by its brilliancy. And just about then appeared the first numbers of *Household Words*, which I devoured with extreme eagerness, and the early volumes of which still appear to me, after a tolerably wide experience of such matters, to be perfect models of what a magazine intended for general reading should be. In them, besides the admirable work done by Dickens himself—and he never was better than in his concentrated essays—there were the dawning genius of Sala, which had for me a peculiar fascination; the novels of Mrs. Gaskell; the antiquarian lore of Peter Cunningham and Charles Knight; the trenchant criticism of Forster; the first-fruits of Wilkie Collins's unrivalled plot-weaving; the descriptive powers of R. H. Horne, who as a prose-writer was terse and practical; the poetic pathos of Adelaide Procter; the Parisian sketches of Blanchard Jerrold; the singularly original "Roving Englishman" series of Grenville Murray; the odd humour of Henry Spicer.

Only vaguely in those days had I heard of these delightful beings; but of the writers engaged on the *Man in the Moon*, a humorous illustrated monthly periodical then appearing under the acknowledged editorship of Albert Smith and Angus Reach, I had somewhat more direct knowledge. I had seen Charles Kenney at the French plays talking to an earnest-faced long-haired young man whom he called Angus Reach; and at the house of some friends I had met a delightful old lady whom they and everyone addressed as "Aunt Sally," and who was actually the live aunt of that rollicking *littérateur*, Albert Smith, and dwelt in her nephew's cottage in that very village of Chertsey about which he was always writing. "Aunt Sally" was not the rose, but she had lived very close to it, and I venerated her accordingly.

What an existence was that led by those men! To write, and to publish what you wrote, and to be paid for writing it! The theatrical critics, too, with free *entrée* everywhere, and wielding such enormous power! I knew them all by sight, and used to sit gaping at them with wonder and admiration. John Oxenford of the *Times*, enthroned in a box; David Hastings for the *Herald;* Reach, and sometimes Shirley Brooks, for the *Chronicle;* Howard Glover for the *Morning Post;* Heraud, the long-haired epic poet, for the *Athenæum;* Stirling Coyne for the *Sunday Times;* and Bayle Bernard for the *Weekly Dispatch.* The two last I knew personally, as they had been writers for the Adelphi in my father's time, and I soon made acquaintance with the others. And the more I saw of them, the more I envied them, and the stronger grew my desire to enter myself of their craft. It was a most pleasant way, and the only way which occurred to me, of gratifying two strong aspirations—to make myself a name of some kind, and to earn some money in addition to my official salary. I wanted to be something more than a clerk in the Post Office, to be known as something else than the everlasting "son of—Adelphi, you know." And though I have often been told, and though I believe, that I should have done very well as an actor, having some mimetic faculty and dramatic power of narration, I never contemplated an appearance on the stage.

To get admitted into the ranks of literary men, among whom I might possibly, by industry and perseverance, rise to some position, began to be my constant thought; and I was encouraged in the hope that I might succeed, perhaps more than anything else, by reading the career of *Pendennis*, which, in its well-remembered yellow cover, had then been appearing month by month for the last two years, and in its complete form was just obtainable at the libraries. There is no prose story in our English language, not even the *Christmas Carol*, not even *The Newcomes*, not even the *Scenes of Clerical Life* or *Silas Marner* —and now I have named what are to me the most precious—which interests and affects me like *Pendennis*. It had this

effect from the very first. I knew most of it so thoroughly. The scenes in the provincial theatre—the Fotheringay, her father, the prompter, the company—were such perfect creations (to this day I have never seen any hint as to where Thackeray got his study of these people, who were quite out of his usual line); the position of Pendennis and his mother was so analogous to that of me and mine—her devotion, his extravagance; the fact that I was personally acquainted with Andrew Arcedeckne, the original of Foker, in whom he was reproduced in the most ludicrously lifelike manner: all this awakened in me a special interest in the book; and when, in the course of Pen's fortunes, he enters upon the literary career, writes his verses for the *Spring Annual*, dines with Bungay, visits Shandon, is engaged on the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and chums with Warrington, who makes that ever-to-be-quoted speech about the power of the press: "Look at that, Pen! There she is, the great engine; she never sleeps," etc.—when I came to this portion of the book my fate was sealed. To be a member of that wonderful Corporation of the Goosequill, to be recognised as such, to be one of those jolly fellows who earned money and fame, as I thought, so easily and so pleasantly, was the one desire of my life; and, if zeal and application could do it, I determined that my desire should be gratified.

But, as I have since had occasion to point out to many scores of eager neophytes, the literary profession is the very one in which, though zeal and application are afterwards of great assistance, they are not the be-all and end-all: something more is absolutely requisite at the outset. It is of no use, as John Oxenford used to say, looking over his spectacles in his inimitably dry sententious way—"It's of no use printing in italics if you've got no ink;" and it certainly is of no use being remarkably practical and business-like in literature if you have no ideas to express. I had, or thought I had, ideas about certain small matters, but how to express them, and where to find the opportunity for such expression, was the difficulty. I had written tolerable verses at school, and had continued the

practice, off and on. I felt sure, though I had never attempted it, that I could describe a play and fairly criticise the acting; equally, I could review a novel or a book of travel; and could, I thought, narrate any personal experience which might be worth recording. But how, and when, and where? The desire for some such outlet was becoming overwhelming, and was making me positively ill. Thus, then, my Muse laboured, and thus, at last, was she delivered.

It was, I grieve to say, in church, in St. John's Wood Chapel, facing down the Park Road, and well known to all frequenters of Lord's. We had a pew there, and my mother was a very regular attendant. The incumbent was a most excellent but rather dry and prosy old gentleman, a Scotchman named Wharton; and one Sunday morning, while he was holding forth, my thoughts wandered away to the frontispiece of a book I had read in my boyhood, called *Lives of the Brigands*, or some such title, by a man named, I think, Macfarlane. The frontispiece illustrated a story in the book. On the death of a brigand chief, the command was claimed by a young fellow who had recently joined the band, but had always given evidence of cleverness and courage. The claim was allowed, provided he consented, as a proof of his devotion to the cause, to kill the girl to whom he was engaged, and to this suggestion he assented. Old Mr. Wharton boomed above me in his wooden box, and my thoughts began to work. It was a good subject. Pen's first printed verses were suggested by a picture. Could not I—? in the same metre, too. No need of much effort of memory to recall that—it was always in my mind:

> "Although I enter not,
> Yet round about the spot
> Sometimes I hover."

That was it. Now, let me see. "And my dear braithren—" O dear, that will never do! We must shut Mr. Wharton more completely out of this affair. Now, let us suppose that the second in command addresses the candidate, and names the terms on which the band will elect him:

"Thou hast claimed to be our chief,
Thou art strong in thy belief
Of thy powers:
Thou boastest nerve and skill
Enough to curb a will
Such as ours!"

That stanza, and one or two more, were completed before the worthy old clergyman dismissed us. When I reached home I worked away at my subject, and that evening I read the verses to my mother, taking care not to wound her by telling her where the original conception had taken place. My dear critic's judgment was not blinded by her maternal love, but she thought the little poem good enough to pass muster in any magazine.

Then the question arose, Where to send it? Several periodicals were discussed and put aside as too grand, too important, too serious. Finally, we resolved that Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, the proprietor and editor of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, should be the favoured recipient. So I sent the verses, with a modest letter, explaining who I was, "the son of," etc., and anxiously waited the great man's reply. It came almost before I expected it, and it was delightful. Mr. Ainsworth had read the verses, and found them excellent; he was pleased to see that the son of his old friend was at an early age exhibiting talent, though in a different line from that in which his father had shone; he had great pleasure in accepting the poem, which would appear in an early number of the magazine. Meanwhile, a proof would be sent me.

There was joy in our little household that day: there was ecstasy two days later, when the proof arrived. I shall never forget that proof: it had a printed ticket stuck on to the left-hand corner, desiring that after it had been revised it should be sent to Mr. Somebody at Beaufort House, in the Strand. Save some small error in punctuation, there was nothing to correct; but I was not going to trust the precious paper to the post, in which it might have been delayed or lost; so I set off with it myself to Beaufort House, noticing as I passed down the Strand

the name of "Warrington," a seal-engraver, over a shop-door, which, with my Pendennis worship, I took as a good omen. I found Messrs. Whiting's printing-office—I had plenty of experience of it afterwards, for it was there *All the Year Round* was printed, and it was burned down long ago; I found Mr. Somebody—the first printer, with the exception of the Fairbrothers in Bow Street, who did the theatrical-bill work, I had ever seen—in a long low room at the top of an enormous flight of stairs, and placed the proof in his hand. He was a fat little man, in black calico sleeves, and with a dirty white apron looped over his shoulders. He seemed rather surprised at my calling on him, but received me with a half-pitying smile: he could not say exactly when the verses would appear, but no doubt, as Mr. Ainsworth, according to what I had told him, had said it would be soon, why, it would be soon! That was all I could get from Mr. Somebody—but what did it matter? Was I not already "one of them"? was there not work of mine actually in type? Let long-haired Reach and complacent Shirley Brooks look to themselves! I had started on my career, and ere long would come thundering up alongside them!

The verses about the brigands were not in the next number of *Ainsworth's Magazine*, at which I was surprised; nor in the one succeeding, at which I was indignant. I wrote a letter to Mr. Ainsworth, indeed I wrote many, ranging from the urgent appeal to the sarcastic invective: he replied to one, but wisely ignored the rest. And it may interest young authors, or would-be authors, to know that these celebrated verses never did appear in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, but saw the light a year or two afterwards in a *Keepsake*, when I was beginning to make my way along the thorny path. It is only two or three years ago that I told this story in the presence and to the great amusement of Mr. Ainsworth, with whom I had a pleasant acquaintance, at a banquet given in his honour at Manchester.

About this time, towards the close of the year 1851, I made the personal acquaintance of Albert Smith, with whom I

speedily contracted an intimate friendship, a friendship the warmth and closeness of which were not in the least affected by the fact that he was fifteen years my senior. I had met him twice previous to this. Early in '47, just after my appointment to the Post Office, and while I was still the rawest of youths, my mother, with more affection than discretion, had asked for and obtained permission for me to accompany her to a dinner to which she had been invited by Mr. and Mrs. Horace Twiss, at their house in Park Place, St. James's Street. Mr. Twiss, who was connected with the Kemble family, was himself affiliated to journalism and literature—he was the first Parliamentary summary writer in the *Times*, and the author of the *Life of Lord Eldon*, and had been an old friend of my father's. The dinner was, oddly enough, given on the day of a "general fast," which had been solemnly fixed by proclamation of Parliament "on account of the grievous scarcity and dearth of divers articles of sustenance and necessaries of life." There was certainly no dearth of luxury at Horace Twiss's table—no dearth of wit around it. There was a large party, but I can only recollect the famous editor of the *Times*, John Delane, whose presence I had indeed forgotten, until he reminded me of it years after; Albert Smith; and Thomas Knox Holmes, who saw and pitied my "fish-out-of-water" condition in such a gathering—I was only sixteen—and took special pains to talk to me and set me at my ease. After dinner, Arthur Smith, M. Hallett, and others of their set came, and being joined by Albert, sang some of the Christy Minstrel airs just coming into vogue, the words having been parodied to apply to persons and matters of the day.

Albert Smith had always a great admiration and regard for my mother, whom he met there for the first time, and said a few kind words to me on my introduction to him. Once afterwards I had met him in the green-room of the Adelphi. But we had never really known each other until one autumn night, when I found him dining late at the Garrick Club. When his dinner was over he sat down at my table, and talked so

pleasantly that, instead of adjourning to the smoking-room—he was not a smoker—I remained with him. We commenced pacing the room side by side, up and down, and so we continued until nearly midnight. I do not know what we talked about—possibly I opened my heart to him, and told him how I envied and longed for a literary life—but then and there commenced a friendship which continued close and intimate, with but one small break, until his death nine years after; and to this friendship I owe much of my life's happiness, amongst other items of it my wife.

At this time Albert Smith was desperately busy in the preparation of his new entertainment. In the previous August he had made an ascent of Mont Blanc, in those days a very rare feat; he had written an account of it in *Blackwood;* and, garnished with songs, "characters," and splendid illustrative views by William Beverly, it was to form the staple of a monologue to be given by him at the Egyptian Hall, the principal room of which he had just acquired, and which was being decorated for the purpose. He was not a novice at the work; two years previously he had made his first appearance before the public at Willis's Rooms, in an entertainment written by himself, called "The Overland Mail," descriptive of the route to India, relieved by sketches of character and "patter" songs, also illustrated by Mr. Beverly, whose fame was then dawning.

Let me picture him as he was in those days when our intimacy commenced. A man of thirty-five years of age, with large head, large body, short legs; long hair, long reddish-brown beard and moustache, small keen deep-set grey eyes, good aquiline nose, small hands and feet; always badly dressed: when at home at work, he wore a short blue blouse, such as is to be seen on all the Swiss peasants, and an old pair of trousers; in the street he was given to gaudy neckerchiefs, and had a festoon of "charms" dangling from his watch-chain. He lived at No. 12, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, the drawing-room floor of which, and several of the bedrooms, were at the

service of his parents, one aunt, and a sister, who were entirely dependent on him, and to whom he behaved with constant affection and liberality, while the ground-floor he kept to himself. The front dining-room was, save on the occasion of his not infrequent supper-parties, but little used. The back room was his sanctum, where he worked at a small carved-oak davenport, the facsimile of which has been in my possession for years. The room was lined with books, which also covered the floor, together with proof-sheets, prints, playbills, bits of tapestry or silk-stuff, and all kinds of literary litter. On the wall were an old clock which did not go, a water-colour picture of the Marquise de Brinvilliers hesitating between dagger or poison; on the door a framed engraving, after Horace Vernet, of the ghostly horseman in Bürger's *Lenore*, a ballad which Albert translated very successfully; one of the windows was fitted with an aquarium, a novelty in those days; on the broad mantelpiece, hung with faded stuff, was a figure of a Swiss peasant with a clock-face in his waistcoat; all kinds of small Swiss carved toys, Turkish slippers, Egyptian small idols, Danton's statuettes of Rubini and Lablache, Venetian glasses, goblets, and flagons—rare then, in the præ-Salviati period—a lady's black silk mask with a lace fall, an Italian stiletto, and an old Roman lamp. On a small table, under a glass shade, was a pair of female hands, beautifully modelled in wax, the originals being Lady Blessington's. In an old oak *armoire*, besides all kinds of rubbish, was a bottle of sherry, which was constantly being produced with the short invitation, "Have a drink?" one of the Venetian glasses being brought down for the purpose, and duly wiped on the host's blouse or a convenient duster. In a case in the hall stood a skeleton, a memento of Albert's student-days at the Middlesex Hospital, which I have seen, after old Pagan fashion, propped in a chair at the supper-table, with a chaplet of flowers round its skull.

I have never met any man more thorough in his whole character, certainly no one more thorough in his likes and dislikes, than Albert Smith: from the moment he "took me up"

he presented me, with glowing credentials, to his immediate set, and I was at once cordially received by them. Most prominent among them was his younger brother Arthur, a man full of cleverness of a quaint kind, of a remarkably sweet disposition and winning manner, and of, as was about to be proved, singular aptitude for business. He, too, had been a medical student, but up to this period had made no particular mark in life, the only incident in his career worth mention having been his marriage with an heiress; but he rose with the opportunity, and in the organization of all the before-the-curtain arrangements of the Egyptian Hall undertaking — the most important provision for money-taking, check-taking, money-payments, bill-posting, advertising, the comfort of the audience, everything, in fact, save the actual delivery of the lecture and songs—he developed a special ability which I have never seen equalled. Albert Smith was never tired of acknowledging that a very large proportion of the extraordinary success attending his nine years' tenancy of the Egyptian Hall was due to his brother's unremitting care and attention; and Dickens, the first and second series of whose public readings he planned and superintended, had equal faith in his business talent, as well as a deep personal regard for him. "As for poor Arthur Smith," Dickens wrote to Forster, immediately after A. S.'s death in '61, "it is as if my right arm were gone."

Arthur was by no means "literary," had read very little and written nothing; but he had keen observation and was very suggestive. Much of Albert's successful fun had its origin in Arthur's droll ideas, and Albert used to say that Arthur's riddle, "What is marmalade?" the answer being a quotation from the description on the pot, "An excellent substitute for butter at breakfast," was entitled to rank among the best conundrums of the day. Arthur lived with his brother in Percy Street, and was with him almost every hour of the day; he received me at once into his regard, and thenceforth I was almost as intimate with him as with Albert. Just at this time I used to join them after leaving my office, generally finding them among the

scaffolding and whitewash of the Egyptian Hall, then under process of alteration; then we would adjourn to some cheap and quiet place for dinner, and spend the rest of the evening together.

Prominent among the intimates of both the brothers at that time was Joseph Hulme Robins, known to everyone as "Joe Robins," also a quaint humourist, and in many respects a very entertaining fellow. Robins, who was a nephew of the well-known auctioneer, had been a fellow-student with Albert at the Middlesex Hospital, had accompanied him on his trip to the East, and on his return had become assistant to Dr. Beaman, of Covent Garden, whose daughter he afterwards married. One of his stories of this experience was that, it being considered right he should attend the funeral of an infant patient, he was walking up the churchyard of St. Paul's, his face in his handkerchief, when a boy who recognised him called out, "Who pisoned the babby?" and created much scandal. Coming into a legacy shortly after, Robins abandoned medicine, and put his money into a Manchester warehouse in the City; but he knew nothing of business, and soon lost his all. He then went on the stage, but the extraordinarily humorous perception and expression which characterized him in private deserted him completely in public, and he made little or no mark. He died a few years since, after a long illness.

At his best he was one of the funniest men I have ever seen. He had a comic face with pendulous cheeks, and a stout figure, knew music, could sing fairly, and imitate excellently. He had several little scenes of his own arrangement, lasting two minutes, which were infinitely diverting: he would imitate an approaching train, the puffing of the engine, its going under an arch, its stopping—"Wolverton! Wolverton!" the descent of a passenger, the rush to the refreshment-room, demand of a cup of tea, agony at its heat, blowing it frantically, ringing of bell, whistle of engine, tea-consumer left behind! He would imitate the marching off of the band after trooping the colours, the tuning of the instruments in a theatrical orchestra and the

remarks of the performers, an operatic scene between soprano, tenor, and bass, the feeding of the animals at the Zoo, rocket-time at Vauxhall, and a hundred other things. One of his favourite jokes was to rattle an enormous chain on the street-door in Percy Street, throwing it down and exclaiming melodramatically, "Friends to the prisoner!" He was thoroughly versed in the mysteries of pantomime lore, and it was to this, and to his personal qualifications, that he owed his selection to play Clown in the Amateur Pantomime, of which more anon.

With the Keeley family—Mr. and Mrs. Keeley and their two daughters, Mary and Louise—Albert Smith had a long-existent friendship. He had written plays and burlesques for the Lyceum when under their management, and the elder daughter, who afterwards became his wife, had made her *début* in his version of *The Cricket on the Hearth*. For Robert Keeley's natural wit and shrewdness, and for his artistic impersonations, he had great admiration. I was speedily presented to the Keeleys—Mrs. Keeley had, of course, known me as a child—was made free of their house, and received from them constant kindness. They lived at that time at No. 19, Brompton Square, in that region which was once the chosen spot for theatrical tents to be pitched. Farrens, Keeleys, Buckstones, Wigans, and Miss Faucit have I known in Brompton Square; Planché in Michael's Grove; T. P. Cooke in Thurloe Square; Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris in Gore Lodge, Fulham; John Reeve and G. H. Rodwell in Brompton Row; Wright in Chelsea; Miss Woolgar—where she still lives—in the Vale, Chelsea. The omnibuses were filled with actors, and footlight celebrities were common as blackberries. Not many of them were to be met at the Keeleys', however, whose "connection" was strictly a private one, composed of many pleasant elements, young and old, which were generally brought together on a Sunday evening. In the week there was no time for festivity at No. 19, for rehearsals in the morning and acting at night kept the Keeleys constantly engaged, while the afternoon was rigidly devoted to purposes of rest, all callers being tabooed.

Another friend of Albert Smith's to whom I was presented, and who was good enough to admit me to an intimacy which was greatly to my advantage, was James Lyster O'Beirne, an Irishman but recently arrived in London, connected with the law and the press, and secretary of a public company. To Mr. O'Beirne I owe absolutely my first introduction to the public, my first actual acquaintance with the delightful mysteries of a printing-office, my first apprenticeship to journalism. Thus it came about: after reading some verses of mine, a little skit that had especial interest to him and Albert Smith, Mr. O'Beirne informed me that amongst other press work, he edited the *Court Journal*, then the property of Mr. W. Thomas, a well-known newsagent in Catherine Street, Strand, and that, if I chose, he could, he thought, get me "on" to that organ. I need not say I accepted the offer with delight. I saw Mr. Thomas, and I was engaged at a salary of *1l.* a week, very irregularly paid—hear this, all ye budding journalists!—to contribute regular dramatic criticisms, occasional poems, and anything else I liked to send in. My first poem—I have it before me at the present writing, duly cut out, and pasted in a book by my mother's proud care—was published in the *Court Journal* of the 6th March, 1852, verses "On the Death of Thomas Moore," an event which had happened at the end of the previous month.

So I was Pendennis at last! with my *entrée* to the theatres, and my power of saying what I liked about them, and my delightful visits to the printing-office, and my proofs, and my colloquies with my colleague, Mr. Lumley, now and for many years proprietor and editor of the *C. J.*, the circulation and influence of which he has enormously extended. James O'Beirne was very kind to me. I had the run of his chambers at the corner of King Street and St. James's Street, now a club, and the advantage of his advice and experience.

Just about this time, too—the spring of 1852—was established the original Fielding Club, of which I was a constant attendant, and where I spent many happy hours and made

many pleasant and useful acquaintances. It had a predecessor in the C.C.C., or Cider Cellar Club, held at the tavern of that name, in a room at the bottom of the stairs on the right, immediately facing the bar. I was there once or twice as a visitor, but was not a member: it was, in fact, before my time. The establishment of a night club—the "Fielding" was the name selected by Thackeray, to whom the choice of title was delegated—was decided on in consequence of the impossibility of getting supper at the Garrick, or, indeed, of infusing anything like liveliness into that temple, after midnight. It was doubtless unreasonable to expect that the necessarily small staff of a small club should be ready both for day and night duties; but the want of such a place of resort had long been experienced, and it was determined it should be supplied in the best way possible. "Offley's," a famous tavern of former times, situate in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, had fallen upon evil days, its custom was gone, its name almost forgotten; the position for our purpose was most desirable, and the premises were secured for the Fielding.

I shall best give an idea of the members of this once famous club by quoting from a descriptive poem, written by Albert Smith, with a little of my collaboration, about the winter of '52. It was evoked by a little joke amongst ourselves at the expense of our members, which need not be recalled:

I.

There was high festival that night within Saint Offley's Hall
(For so they term a place where sons of night hold festival);
There was Sir Armytage[1] of race; and Archy[2] on the go
(He never stays long anywhere), and Albert[3] of the "show."

[1] Sir George Armytage, Bart., of Kirklees Hall, Yorks, and Cambridge Square, well known in social, turf, and theatrical circles; one of my oldest and kindest friends, and almost the only survivor, save the principals, of those present at my wedding.

[2] Andrew Arcedeckne, a quaint kind-hearted oddity, of whom I shall often have to speak. He was the original of Foker in *Pendennis*. *Dead.*

[3] Albert Smith. The Egyptian Hall entertainment was always spoken of by us as "the show." *Dead.*

II.

J. W. D.[4] was there, so great in operatic myth,
And using the club note-paper was Arthur, known as "Smith[5];"
And with the Maelstrom's wind-borne spray still glistening in his hair,
The bold Norwegian fisherman, great Pleasant,[6] took his chair.

III.

And Dan,[7] who cried in quick, sharp tones, that never seemed to stop,
"Here! waiter! when the divil are ye going to bring my chop?"
And gentle Jim,[8] who tends the Screws, up fifty pairs of stairs,
And Collingwood,[9] who never goes to bed but unawares.

IV.

There was the gallant Henry,[10] and bold Brownlow[11] standing by,
Deep in a talk with the great MONS.[12] of Wagner and of Gye,

[4] J. W. Davison, for many years chief musical critic of the *Times*. *Dead.*

[5] Arthur Smith, Albert's brother. *Dead.*

[6] Sir Charles Taylor, Bart., of Hollycombe, and King Street, St. James's, who always rented a salmon-fishing in Norway. Called "Old Pleasant," from his invariable cynicism. Anthony Trollope has well described him: "A man rough of tongue, brusque in his manners, odious to those who dislike him, somewhat inclined to tyranny, he is the prince of friends, honest as the sun, and as open-handed as Charity itself." This, by the way, is an excellent description of the writer, Trollope himself. *Dead.*

[7] Daniel O'Connell, youngest son of the "Liberator," then M.P. for Tralee, now a Special Commissioner of Income-tax.

[8] James Lyster O'Beirne, the secretary of the General Screw Steam Shipping Company; frequently mentioned in this volume.

[9] Henry Collingwood Ibbetson, a great friend of mine, and one of the gentlest and kindest of human beings. *Dead.*

[10] Sir Henry Percival de Bathe, Bart., then Captain de Bathe, of the Scots Fusilier Guards.

[11] Colonel Brownlow Knox, of the Scots Fusilier Guards, and M.P. for Marlow. He was pecuniarily interested at that time in the fortunes of the newly-established Royal Italian Opera. *Dead.*

[12] Mons. Jullien. See *ante*. *Dead.*

And good old Mac[13]—fair Strasburg's pride—who everybody knows,
And Vivian[14] of the flowing locks—so different to Joe's![15]

V.

There were four Williams there. First, he with voice of deepest might,[16]
Who says, "I'll tell you what it is" (and William tells you right);
And he of Willow-pattern fame,[17] who ne'er was known to shout;
And he the leading journal's pet—terror of Ingram's trout.[18]

VI.

And he, again, the bright-hued Artist-king of Fairyland;[19]
And with him was good brother Bob,[20] just come up from the Strand;
And Walter[21] the Enthusiastic spoke, with figures rare,
To FOW[22] of the "bright water jug"—he didn't use it there.

[13] Tom Macdonald, formerly of the *Morning Chronicle*, then secretary to the Canada Trust and Loan Company. The reference to Strasburg I have forgotten. *Dead.*

[14] George Henry Lewes, at that time writing as "Vivian" in the *Leader*. *Dead.*

[15] J. M. Langford, Messrs. Blackwood's London representative. *Dead.*

[16] William Bolland, son of Mr. Justice Bolland, a big, heavy, handsome man, of much peculiar humour. He always spoke of himself as "William." He was the original of Fred Bayham in *The Newcomes;* and I ventured to reproduce him as William Bowker in *Land at Last*. *Dead.*

[17] William P. Hale, part-author with Frank Talfourd of the burlesque *The Willow Pattern Plate*. Often mentioned herein. He was a very loud talker. *Dead.*

[18] William Howard Russell, LL.D., the *doyen* of special correspondents. This was before he won his spurs in the Crimea; and then he was only known as a very clever graphic reporter and amusing Irish humourist. He was a great fisherman, and had the run of some water belonging to Mr. Ingram, M.P.

[19] William Beverly.

[20] Robert Roxby, then acting at the Lyceum. *Dead.*

[21] Walter Lacy, the evergreen dealer in tropes and metaphors.

[22] F. O. Ward, familiarly known as Fow. A very brilliant man, leader-writer on the *Times*, and a pioneer of sanitary reform. The "bright water-jug" was one of his special hobbies. *Dead.*

VII.

And Tom, whose pointed pen supplies the Stage and Board of Health,[23]
And Peter,[24] from whose handbook mines great Murray draws much wealth;
And Frank,[25] who made an awful pun, the whiles his grog he drank,
As Charley[26] told how Kean that day had called *him* also "frank."

VIII.

And Cuthbert of the ringlets came[27] (his namesake was not there,
With certain "cheerful snobs" that day he tasted City fare);[28]
And stout Sir Evan[29] shook his sides; with him the culprit's friend,
Who saves "the prisoner at the bar" from many an awkward end.[30]

IX.

And "handsome Jack," to whose dear girls and swells his life Punch owes;[31]
And Leigh, the sole *jeune premier* that our stage at present knows;[32]

[23] Tom Taylor, secretary of what was then the Board of Health, afterwards the Local Government Office. *Dead.*

[24] Peter Cunningham, F.S.A., author of the *Handbook of London*, etc. *Dead.*

[25] Frank Talfourd, an inveterate punster. *Dead.*

[26] Charles Lamb Kenney. He said one night at the Fielding, with an air of great simplicity, "I don't think I can have made myself agreeable this evening. I was dining with Charles Kean, who was in great force, and told some excellent stories; and I said, what a pity it was that he, who was such a capital fellow off the stage should be such a bad actor!" "And what did Kean say?" we asked. "Well," said Kenney, "I don't think Kean liked it much; but all he said was, 'You are pleased to be frank this evening, Kenney.'" *Dead.*

[27] Cuthbert Ellison, barrister; afterwards a London police-magistrate. *Dead.*

[28] Captain Cuthbert Ellison, of the Grenadier Guards. *Dead.*

[29] Sir Evan Mackenzie, Bart. *Dead.*

[30] Either Serjeant Ballantine or Baron Huddleston. Both were members of the Fielding, and both at that time were often "special" at the Old Bailey.

[31] John Leech. *Dead.*

[32] Leigh Murray. *Dead.*

And he, the pride of that great Sunday print whose columns range
From vestries of St. Pancras to what "novel" is "or strange."[33]

X.

Another Arthur, too, of calm straightforward sense was there ;[34]
And Tom, who licks the cabmen when they ask beyond their fare ;[35]
And Tom again, whose soft dark curls the march of time disdain ;[36]
And he who is so well beloved by Morris and Delane.[37]

XI.

The silver-toned snuff-taking Dick of some young beauty spoke ;[38]
The excellent "*Chat Huant*" laughed—good audience for a joke[39]—
At something wicked Shirley said, who has so much to do[40]
(He writes the *Morning Chronicle* each day, the whole way through).

XII.

And Edmund was instructing all, how that the old C.C.,[41]
Transported for their crimes, were wrecked with rocks upon their lee ;

[33] Thomas Behan, editor of the *Observer*. *Dead.*

[34] Arthur Pratt Barlow.

[35] Tom Buckland, nephew of the Dean of Westminster, and very handy with his fists. Now assistant editor of *Calcutta Englishman*.

[36] Thomas Knox Holmes.

[37] Thomas W. Bowlby, at that time a solicitor, and intimate friend of the gentlemen named. A particularly agreeable pleasant man. Mr. Bowlby afterwards, in the year '60, accompanied the allied English and French expedition against the Chinese, as representative of the *Times ;* and being, with others, taken prisoner, was barbarously murdered. *Dead.*

[38] Richard Arabin, son of Serjeant Arabin, well known about London. *Dead.*

[39] Edward F. Smyth Pigott, now her Majesty's Examiner of Plays. "Chat Huant" was Mr. Pigott's *nom de plume* in his own journal, the *Leader*.

[40] Charles Shirley Brooks. Political and social subjects, literary and art criticism, jokes and verse-writing, all were within the range of this admirable journalist. *Dead.*

[41] I used to give a kind of little entertainment, with imitations of various members of the old Cider Cellars Club, who were supposed to have suffered shipwreck.

How one swell bullied "Mathew"!—he who haunts the Garrick hall,
And hours for his master waits, who never comes at all.

o o o o o o o

XVI.

And then there came a mighty man, who, 'tis but fair to state,
Among the small is Affable, though Great amongst the great—
The good Pendennis.[42]

Other prominent members of the club were John Bidwell and the Hon. W. Grey of the Foreign Office, the latter *attaché* at Stockholm; Morgan John O'Connell, nephew of the Liberator and M.P. for Kerry; John E. Jones, an excellent sculptor and Irish humourist; John C. Deane, who held some position in regard to Great Exhibitions generally, and who sang divinely; Luard, a clever artist, who died young; G. L. Hall, also an artist; J. C. O'Dowd, now Deputy Judge-Advocate-General, at that time assistant editor of the *Globe*, then a Liberal organ; and Captains Charles Seymour and Augustus (Jerry) Meyrick of the Scots Fusiliers.

There must have been some peculiar attraction about the place and its associations, for I do not think I ever saw men work so heartily to achieve a success for anything of the kind as did its members. For the first eighteen months of its existence, save, of course, during the autumn vacation, one was sure of finding a gathering there of a night, small perhaps, but always attractive; and it was eminently a place in which men cast aside their ordinary work-a-day shell. There was very little singing, and recitations, which are now so common, would not have been endured for an instant; but there was abundance of good talk, both general conversation and private chat. I well recollect coming in late one night, when Charles Kenney and George Henry Lewes were the only occupants of the room. They were chatting over the fire, literally "playing at"—as children say—being French peasants, and discussing the pros-

[42] Of course, Thackeray. *Dead.*

pects of an apocryphal vintage in a Burgundy *patois*. Occasionally there would be a field-night, when a mock trial would be improvised, or some rare story-telling; but there was quite enough amusement to make me a regular nightly visitor, and it was not, I fear, till 1 A.M. that what we used to call the "North-Western Mail" was ready for departure: said North-Western Mail being a four-wheel cab, which first deposited Albert and Arthur in Percy Street, dropped me in Gloucester Place, and concluded its journey by leaving Sir George Armytage in Cambridge Square.

The "Mont Blanc" entertainment was produced at the Egyptian Hall on the 15th March, 1852, with an amount of success which was totally unexpected. Since the days of Mathews and my father the monopolylogue had fallen into desuetude, and though an attempt at resuscitation of it had been made by a Mr. Woodin, with a performance which he called his *Carpet-bag and Sketch-book*, his claim to success lay rather in the rapidity of his costume changes than in the excellence of his impersonation. Albert Smith's appeal to the public was made from a totally different standpoint. He had a good circulating library renown as a novelist, *Ledbury* and *Christopher Tadpole* having been widely read; his songs for John Parry had introduced him to another section of the public; while his latest productions—shilling "Social Zoologies," a natural history of *The Gent*, then of *The Ballet-girl*, and then of *The Flirt*—had achieved vast popularity, so much so, indeed, that his publisher, worthy Mr. Bogue, who had paid him 10*l.* for *The Gent*, a few months after gave him 100*l.* for *The Flirt*. He was popular in literary and theatrical circles, and the ascent had been much talked of in "society," one of his colleagues in the adventure having been the Hon. Lionel Sackville West, who is now our Minister at Washington. Then the whole tone of the performance was good, pleasantly and conversationally given as a kind of one-sided chat; the painted views by William Beverly were admirable; and lastly, the comfort of the audience had been thoroughly attended to. They sat on

good chairs in a room well carpeted and curtained, charmingly decorated, and properly ventilated; and there were no "harpies," as Albert used to call them, catching at fees for cloaks, programmes, or what-not. The abolition of fees to attendants, now so general, was introduced by Albert Smith.

Shortly after I had seen this success well assured, and had shared in some of the festivities with which it was celebrated, I started with Mr. O'Beirne for a ten days' holiday in Paris. We put up at the then existing, but since destroyed, Hôtel des Princes in the Rue Richelieu, and had what may emphatically be called "a good time." There we were joined by Tom Macdonald, who knew his Paris from the old Thackeray days. The famous house in "the New Street of the Little Fields" had indeed vanished, but there were others famous then, but which now exist no longer, and of them we made frequent trial. Among them were the old Café de Paris on the Italian Boulevard; and Philippe's in the Rue Montorgueil, with his *œufs brouillés aux truffes;* and his next-door neighbour, the Rochers de Cancale; and Brébant's—though that is, of course, still going—where we met some journalists, one of whom nearly made me faint with delight by alluding to me as "Monsieur notre confrère." There was a Closerie des Lilas in those days, and a garden at Asnières, the spring opening of which we attended, and joined in a persistent chorus of "Des lamp-i-ons!" lasting for hours, because the promised illuminations were not forthcoming.

But what remains freshest in my mind in connection with that Paris visit is going to see the *Dame aux Camélias*, which had been produced three months before, and was then in the full tide of its success at the Vaudeville, with Fechter and Madame Doche in the principal characters. I read somewhere, a few days ago, that this is a very dull and stupid old play, and I dare say it may be; but I know when I first saw it I was more moved than I ever had been by a theatrical performance. I was not twenty-one then, and the sad fortunes of a consumptive *lorette* were more likely to interest me than they

would now; and, again, such realistic acting, as exhibited both by the man and woman, I had never seen. I can see Doche standing before the fireplace, *achevant la toilette de ses ongles*, and listening with delight to Armand's narration of his visits of inquiry during her illness; I can see Fechter in the ballroom scene gliding to her side, and pleading, "Marguerite, j'ai la fièvre!" I can see him as the act-drop falls flinging the bank-notes before her, and hear his bitter cry, "J'ai payé cette femme!" My companions were equally impressed, and we strode out of the theatre in silence, each occupied with his own reflections. So that we were not best pleased when an acquaintance, a chattering Englishman, tacked himself on to us, and, first exclaiming that he "didn't think much of it," wanted to know what that fellow was doing when he threw the money about, as "he spoke so infernally quick, I could not make out what he said."

I continued my contributions to the *Court Journal* with perfect regularity and great pleasure to myself during the year, before the end of which I had launched out on to other literary seas. After the death of Lady Blessington, the annual which she had established, the *Keepsake*, was brought out by her niece, the lovely and accomplished Miss Marguerite Power, who, for old friendship's sake, was supported by the leaders among the old Gore House set. Tennyson, Thackeray, and Bulwer Lytton contributed to the first number published under her editorship, so that, though there was no honorarium, it may be imagined I was tolerably proud when an Ingoldsby poem of mine was accepted by Miss Power, to whom I had been presented by Albert Smith, and I found myself in the *Keepsake* for '53, in company with Thackeray, Monckton Milnes, Barry Cornwall, Landor, Chorley, and other well-known names. Kindly Angus Reach selected the poem for a few hearty encouraging words in his review of the annual in the *Morning Chronicle;* and thoughtful Shirley Brooks, who had seen the notice in proof at the *Chronicle* office, told me of it at a supper at Keeley's, and bade me look out for it next day. That was

the first time any work of mine was noticed by the press. To the kindness of Albert Smith I also owed an introduction to Mr. John Timbs, then sub-editing the *Illustrated London News*, who, in his turn, presented me to his chief, Dr. Charles Mackay, with the result that, when the next Christmas number of the *I. L. N.* was being thought of, two proofs of cuts were forwarded to me, with a request that I would "write up" some verses applicable to them, which, of course, I did, and for which I was very well paid. For several years I wrote verses and stories for the Christmas *Illustrated.*

With the exception of the usual childhood's maladies—measles, scarlet-fever, etc.—I enjoyed very fair health up to this point; but in the very early days of 1853 I was laid up for six weeks with a carbuncle at the back of my neck, which at one time threatened to be serious. As it was, it caused the postponement—though not for long—of an impending and important event, my marriage. Very soon after making Albert Smith's acquaintance, we made two of a large party which went to the evening exhibition of a Diorama of the Holy Land, at St. George's Gallery, Hyde Park Corner. By him I was presented to a young lady, one of the party, with whom I immediately fell desperately in love. After an engagement of twelve months we were married, before I had completed my twenty-second year, at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, on the 14th April, 1853. Albert was my "best man," and my mother, Arthur Smith, T. Buckland, Sir George Armytage, and J. L. O'Beirne were among my friends present at the ceremony.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY MARRIED LIFE.

1853—1857.

From a brief honeymoon passed at Bath, Teignmouth, and Torquay, I was recalled by a summons from one of my brothers-in-law, who wanted to see me on special business. I found, on seeing him, that he thought he had sufficient influence to obtain for me the appointment of secretary to an insurance office in the City, which had just become vacant. This offer, after due consideration, I declined. I should not have been fitted for the place; and though the salary would have been more than what I was actually receiving at the Post Office, there were no prospective advantages, while I should have had no chance of pursuing my literary calling, from which I hoped to derive both pleasure and profit.

When my wife and I returned to town, we took up our abode in a small house where for the past year or two I had lived with my mother, who, with that perfect unselfishness that characterized her life, made it over to us, and agreed to pay the rent. Her intention was to spend some time in the country, and before we came back she had already settled herself for the summer at Henfield, a village in Sussex, near Hurstpierpoint.

Our house was in what was then called Gloucester Place, New Road, at immediate right angles to, but having nothing in common with, Gloucester Place, Portman Square, a far grander locality. The New Road has since been subdivided into Marylebone and Euston Roads, but then it was the New

Road, stretching from Paddington to Islington, and our house was about a mile from the Paddington end. It was small, but so was the rent, sixty pounds a year, and it was quite large enough for my wife and me and our two servants. It had a little garden in front, between it and the road, with a straight line of flagstones leading direct from the gate to the doorsteps, and bits of flower-beds (in which nothing ever grew) intersected by little gravel-paths about a foot wide. This garden was a source of great delight to my humorous friends. Albert Smith would be seen carefully putting one foot before the other, in order that he might not step off the path, and, after wandering in and out between the little beds, would feign excessive fatigue on his arrival at the house, declaring he had been "lost in the shrubbery;" Arthur would suggest that we should have a guide on the spot to show visitors the nearest way; while Collingwood Ibbetson hoped we intended giving some outdoor fêtes in the summer, assuring us that the "band of the Life Guards would look splendid on that," pointing to a bit of turf about the size of a pocket-handkerchief. When the street-door was opened wide back, it entirely absorbed the hall, and we could not get out of the dining-room door; but then we could, of course, always pass out through the "study," a little room like a cistern, which just held my desk and one chair.

There was a very small yard at the back, opening on to a set of stables which had their real entrance in the mews; but we were compelled to cover all our back windows with putty, imitative of ground-glass, on which we stuck cut-out paper designs of birds and flowers, as these looked directly on the rooms over the stables, inhabited by a coachman and his family; and the sight of a stalwart man at the opposite window, shaving himself in very dingy shirt-sleeves, within a few feet of your nose, was not wholly agreeable. We were rather stifled in the upstairs rooms, owing to low ceilings and a diffidence we felt as to opening the windows; for the New Road was a dusty thoroughfare, and the immediate vicinity of a cab-stand, though handy on some occasions, lets one into rather a larger

knowledge of the stock of expletives with which the English language abounds than is good for polite ears. But when we knew that the coachman was out, we used to open the back windows and grow very enthusiastic over "fresh air from Hampstead and Highgate," which, nevertheless, always seemed to me to have a somewhat stably twang.

However, we were very happy in that little house, and neither we nor our friends took much heed of its smallness or lack of conveniences. Our *ménage* was humble enough, and our "good plain cook" was not always to be trusted. I recollect one day, when a boiled leg of mutton had made its appearance in a very "gory" state, Albert went down into the kitchen, and with his own hands prepared an excellent broil. I could not afford good wine, and would not give bad; but there was an ever-flowing barrel of Romford ale, and some Irish whisky, which I procured through Mayne Reid—"Bushmills" was its name—which was highly esteemed. All my old Fielding friends—the Smiths, Ibbetson, Sir George Armytage, W. H. Russell, "Boldero" Goodlake, Peter Cunningham, W. P. Hale, O'Beirne, and T. K. Holmes—would look in from time to time; as also Mayne Reid; W. W. Fenn, who had known me years before; William Coxon, of the 13th Hussars, brother of one of my colleagues at the Post Office; and Herbert Harrington, with whom I afterwards collaborated in dramatic work.

We went out a good deal; there were frequent suddenly improvised suppers at Albert's rooms, or dinners at Verrey's. Sundays we almost invariably spent in the company of the Keeleys, either dining at their house at Brompton Square, or joining with them in some excursion to Richmond, Hampton, Thames Ditton, etc. We had some delightful Sundays at Albert's cottage at Chertsey, whither we would drive on a private omnibus or coach, and dine in a tent in the garden. One large party there I remember, at which it had been whispered Kossuth, then in England, would be present, and there was great disappointment at his non-arrival. In the middle of dinner, however, there was a great stir, and Albert, making his

way through the tent, returned with the distinguished Hungarian. It was, in reality, Tom Taylor, who, admirably disguised with slouched hat and beard—at that time T. T. was clean shaven—delivered a most wonderful composite speech, a few real German words mixed up with much English, pronounced like and sounding like German, to the general delight. We spent a few delightful days with Ibbetson, who had taken a cottage at Hampton Wick; and used to run down to Brighton, to a cheap little lodging we had found there, whenever we could spare the time and the money.

One of our earliest and kindest friends was Mrs. Milner Gibson, who never had a reception without sending us a card. A genuine instinct of hospitality, an innate good feeling, the pleasure that arises from giving pleasure to others, the happiness of seeing those around her happy, were the sole end and aim of the lady who presided over the miscellaneous company that used to meet together in the corner house of Wilton Crescent. Louis Blanc, Mazzini, Sir Alexander Cockburn, Huddleston, Q.C.; Phinn, Q.C.; Planché, Mr. and Mrs. Torrens, Sir Charles and Lady Eastlake, Thackeray, Monckton Milnes, Doyle, Albert and Arthur Smith, Landseer and Leech, Swinton, the Charles Keans, Mrs. Sartoris, Costa, Benedict, Leighton, the Henry Reeves, Pigott, Halle, Biletta, Palgrave Simpson, Chorley, the Alfred Wigans, Mrs. Proctor, Mrs. Dickens—these, together with a troop of Irishmen, Radical members of Parliament, and foreign exiles, were representative guests. It was no mere affair of small-talk, ices, and lemonade. A substantial supper was a feature of the evening, and the foreigners had a pleasant way of rushing down directly that meal was served and sweeping the table. It was here that Leech, returning flushed from an encounter with the linkman, told me laughingly he would not have minded if "Mr. Leech's carriage" had been called, but that the fellow would roar out, "The keb from Nottin' 'Ill!"

Another house where we were made very welcome was Mr. Justice Talfourd's, in Russell Square, where the company was

pretty much the same, with fewer foreigners and more Bar, and where the kindly host, with short-cropped, iron-grey hair and beaming face, would ask his friends, and specially any strangers, to "do him the pleasure of dwinking a glass of wine with him," from the dumpy little Steinwein flagon he held in his hand.

Mrs. Vickris Dickenson, an old friend of Dickens and Wilkie Collins, now the wife of the Dean of Bristol, also invited us frequently to her pleasant parties in Cavendish Square.

Meanwhile, I was not idle. I continued my regular work for the *Court Journal* and wrote a few dramatic criticisms for the *Leader*, a brilliant but not very long-lived journal, which my friend Pigott owned, and to which George Henry Lewes, E. M. Whitty, and other clever men contributed. I had also found my way into several periodicals, notably into *Bentley's Miscellany*, in which appeared my first tale-essay, "My New Year's Eve." I was much pleased at this, for *Bentley's Miscellany* had been portion of my earliest reading, almost as a child; and when I first went to the Post Office I used to lunch at a coffee-shop, long since pulled down, in the first-floor of which there was a large collection of greasy well-thumbed *Miscellany* volumes, which were my delight. Mr. Bentley, to whom I was introduced by Albert Smith, took two or three of my articles, and as many more appeared in *Chambers's Journal*, then, I think, under the editorship of Leitch Ritchie.

I was very anxious that these sketches should appear as a book, and when I thought I had sufficient material, I went, with an introduction from Albert, to Mr. Bogue, the publisher, at 86, Fleet Street, and asked him if he would undertake the little volume. Mr. Bogue received me very pleasantly: I little thought while chatting with him in his office at the back of the shop that, on that very spot exactly twenty years later, the first numbers of *The World* would be published. I left the "copy" with Mr. Bogue, and when I next saw him he told me he was willing to undertake the venture at his own risk; as I was almost utterly unknown, he could not give me anything for it, but he would produce it in such a way that it would be useful

as an advertisement for me. To this I agreed, and he proved as good as his word: "*My Haunts, and their Frequenters*, by Edmund H. Yates," dedicated to his "earliest and kindest literary friend, Albert Smith," appeared in July, 1854, well printed on good paper, and, for an illustration on the cover, a somewhat fancy portrait of the author, seated at his oak davenport, drawn by my old friend, H. G. Hine, who has since won a very high position amongst water-colour artists.

The little book was kindly received by the press: the grave *Athenæum* said, "There is more bone in this contribution to shilling light literature than we usually recognise. Some of the sketches are amusing, and neatly finished off;" the *Atlas*, then extant, and edited by Robert Bell, found it "a lively sketch of the life of a gay man in town, written in a more gentlemanly tone than is usual in such works;" and the *Era*, the *Weekly Dispatch*, and, of course, the *Court Journal*, had all something pleasant to say. I could never learn anything about the sale from Mr. Bogue, save that he "didn't complain," so I imagine he recouped himself for the outlay.

That same year '54 was memorable to me in many ways. In it I made the acquaintance of Charles Dickens. There was no one in the world for whom I had so much admiration, or whom I so longed to know. I had no special object in calling upon him, certainly not the idea of getting him to take my work, for I perfectly allowed that that was not up to the *Household Words* standard; but I thought he would receive me kindly, for my name's sake, and he did. I called at Tavistock House, gave in my card, and was ushered into the drawing-room—a huge room at the back of the house. After a few minutes a lady entered, Miss Hogarth, Dickens's sister-in-law, and, in his own words, "the best and truest friend man ever had." She greeted me most pleasantly, with a winning smile, and told me that Mr. Dickens was busily engaged on work which he could not leave at that moment; but that if I was, as he supposed, the son of Mr. Frederick Yates, formerly of the Adelphi, he would be delighted to see me on the next

Sunday, at two o'clock. Of course I gratefully accepted this appointment, and went away. Be sure I was punctual on Sunday, when I was ushered straight into the presence of the great man, and found him sitting at his desk in the window of the front room on the first-floor, looking on to the little enclosure in which the house stood. He rose to greet me, took my hand in his hearty grip, and placed me in a chair opposite to his.

There were no photographs of celebrities to be purchased in those days, and I had formed my idea of Dickens's personal appearance from the portrait of him, by Maclise, prefixed to *Nickleby*: the soft and delicate face, with the long hair, the immense stock, and the high-collared waistcoat. He was nothing like that. Indeed, my mother, who saw him shortly after this, and who had not met him for fifteen years, declared she should not have recognised him, for, save his eyes, there was no trace of the original Dickens about him. His hair, though worn still somewhat long, was beginning to be sparse; his cheeks were shaved; he had a moustache and a "door-knocker" beard encircling his mouth and chin. His eyes were wonderfully bright and piercing, with a keen, eager outlook; his bearing hearty and somewhat aggressive. He wore, on that occasion, a loose jacket and wide trousers, and sat back in his chair, with one leg under him and his hand in his pocket, very much as in Frith's portrait. "Good God, how like your father!" were his first words. Then he proceeded to talk of his old recollections of the Adelphi, his great admiration for my mother; told me the news of my father's death was part of the budget brought out by the Liverpool pilot, on his return from America; asked me of my mother, of myself, my position and prospects, all in the kindest way. He was off that week with his family to spend the summer at Boulogne, and hoped they should see me on their return. I asked him about Broadstairs, where I had an idea of going for a little holiday, and he praised the place warmly. I do not think I mentioned my literary aspirations to him, save, perhaps, in a

very casual way; but I must very soon after have sent him *My Haunts*, for the following, his first letter to me, alludes to its receipt:

"Boulogne, 30th July, 1854.

My dear Sir,—I have brought your book away, with other pleasant gifts of that nature, to read under a haystack here. If I delay thanking you for it any longer, I am afraid you may think either that I have not got it, or that I don't care for it. As either mistake would be really painful to me, I send this small parcel of thanks to London in a *Household Words* packet, and beg to express a hope that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you under my London haystack (metaphorical for ceiling) when I return home for the winter; and in the meantime, I hope you may like Broadstairs half as well as I do.

Very faithfully yours,
CHARLES DICKENS."

The first time we met after this was, however, under *my* "haystack, metaphorical for ceiling." On the 14th October, this year '54, my eldest son, Frederick Henry Albert, was born; and at a little dinner, given in honour of the christening, towards the end of the following month, Dickens honoured us with his company, and was most delightful. My mother and the two godfathers—Albert Smith and Mr. Wilkinson, my father-in-law—were also present.

In the early autumn I was asked by Mr. Bogue to call in Fleet Street "on a matter of business," which proved to be a desire to secure my services and co-operation in the establishment of a projected new magazine, to be published by Bogue, to be called *Cruikshank's Magazine*, to be illustrated by the celebrated artist, and to be edited by Mr. Smedley, "whom, of course, I knew." I had never heard of Mr. Smedley, and it was not until Bogue mentioned him as the author of *Frank Fairlegh* that I knew of whom he spoke. With that, and other novels from the same pen, full of life and "go," hunting and racing scenes, and strange adventures, I had a casual acquaintance; but I had never seen the author, never met anyone who knew him. So I took a letter of introduction from Mr. Bogue,

and went off at once to Jermyn Street, where Mr. Smedley lived, in the aspiring frame of mind befitting one about to enlist as a light free-lance under a new chief.

As I rode up in the cab, I was picturing to myself the man with whom I was about to become acquainted; and as I now write, those thoughts recur to me exactly as they passed through my mind. I have laughed over them so often with him who was their subject, that there is no wonder at their remaining fixed on my memory. I figured to myself a tall, strongly-built man, of about forty years of age, bald, with a fringe of hair, large breezy whiskers, strong, bony hands, and general muscular development, rather "horsey" in his dress and talk and manner. I expected that his tone would be rather *brusque*, and that I might probably be unable to attain his required standard of "knowingness" in matters relating to the field and the road.

I sent in my letter, and I was ushered into the presence of a gentleman, whom, even in the dim light of a shaded lamp standing on the table by his elbow, I could tell to be suffering under some malformation, as he sat in his wheel-chair—a little man, with a peculiar, clever face; piercing eyes, never moving from the person he was addressing; a manner beginning in earnestness, and then straying into banter; a voice beginning in harshness, and modulating into pleasantest cadence; a bearing which, although, in its endeavour to be thoroughly independent, it almost verged on the repulsive, was, notwithstanding, indefinably attractive. I was so astonished at finding such a difference in what I had expected, that, as I have since thought, my answers to his short and pertinent questions must have been vague and unsatisfactory. At all events, I recollect that my new acquaintance's tone became slightly sarcastic, which recalled me to myself; that I endeavoured to answer him as best I could; that his manner then changed; and that on that, the first day of our acquaintance, we formed an intimate friendship, which continued until the latest hour of his life.

I think that this kindness of heart, veiled occasionally under an affectation of calculating worldliness of mind, and a little cynicism very badly sustained, was the ruling spirit of his life. He was never happy save when doing a kindness to some one —never pleased save when he had some little pet scheme of beneficence, which he would bring out as though he were ashamed of it; while his quivering lips and brimming eyes belied the assumed roughness of his voice and manner. He was soft-hearted to a degree; and his physical malady had kept his intercourse with the world so restricted, that while his mind was full, strong, and manly, his experiences of certain sides of life were as pure and unsullied as those of a young girl. All the impulses of his soul were deep-set, earnest, fervent, and generous. He had heard of the lower views of humanity held by some great men, but he had never had reason to allow their existence; so he frankly and unhesitatingly denied it. He was himself a man "in whom was no guile," and it was very difficult indeed for him to allow its presence in anyone else.

With all the masculinity of his writings (and there are few writers who, in certain phases of description, notably of the hunting-field and the racecourse, have surpassed him), his mind was, to a certain degree, feminine. He had the strong likings and dislikings, petulances, love of small jokes, desire of praise, and irritation at small annoyances, which are frequently found in women; but, on the other hand, he had a magnanimity, an amount of patient long-suffering, and a courage both moral and physical, such as are given to few men. His bodily infirmities, before alluded to, prevented him from indulging in any of the amusements which he most fancied, shut him out from a vast amount of society, kept him a prisoner to his chair; and yet I never heard one syllable of repining escape his lips, though on more than one occasion I have heard him turn off some well-meant though badly-timed commiseration with a light-hearted jest.

A mutual liking springing up between us, I saw much of my new acquaintance; of his father, the High Bailiff of West-

minster—a fine, manly, handsome, elderly gentleman, always very kind to me; and of his mother, a very clever woman of society, who "gave up to parties what was meant for"—better things, and from whom he inherited much of his talent. The whole Smedley family, and especially Frank, soon became very fond of my wife, and we were constantly invited to the house. Owing to Frank Smedley's inability for locomotion, I was enabled to make myself useful to him in seeing the publisher, contributors, and the great George Cruikshank himself, and thus our intimacy rapidly increased. An interview between Cruikshank and Smedley was a very comic sight for a looker-on: the old artist bouncing about the room, illustrating by violent action and gesture everything he said, wholly unrestrained by any fear of becoming grotesque; and the little editor, screwed up in his wheel-chair, peering at his visitor out of the corners of his small eyes, and strongly appreciating every item of the performance.

One story of Frank's about his coadjutor always struck me as being very funny. One warm morning Cruikshank arrived in Jermyn Street, and pulled a chair in front of Smedley's desk, being evidently full of business. The old gentleman's *chevelure* in his later days was always of an extraordinary kind, long wisps of grey hair being brought from the back of his head over the scalp, and secured there with a narrow elastic band. But, in addition to this, on this occasion Smedley perceived that Cruikshank had a small perforated bone wheel fixed in the centre of his forehead. So fascinated was Frank by this extraordinary sight that he could not withdraw his eyes from it; and at last Cruikshank, finding his host's gaze stonily fixed on one spot throughout the interview, testily demanded what he was staring at. "Nothing," Frank replied, endeavouring to excuse himself; but immediately after, the little wheel became detached, and fell on the floor. "You've dropped something," said Cruikshank, poking after it with his stick. "I? No—you," said the host. "Nonsense!" cried the irascible George, who had now picked it up; "nonsense! What do you think I could do with a thing like this?" "All

I know is, that for the last half-hour it has been sticking in the middle of your forehead," returned Frank. "Impossible, sir! quite impossible!" roared Cruikshank. Eventually it appeared that the little wheel was a ventilator, which had slipped from its original position in the crown of Cruikshank's hat, and stuck, with the heat, on his forehead.

Not much was done with *Cruikshank's Magazine*, of which only two or three numbers appeared. As a delineator of character, an illustrator of stories, the veteran artist had lost whatever hold he may once have had on the public, while his fertile fancy, which lasted for many succeeding years, had no scope in such a periodical. However, the magazine had well served my purpose—through it I had established a friendship with Frank Smedley, which was not merely pleasant, but practical. Noting my facility for Ingoldsbian verse, and having himself essayed successfully in that line, my new friend proposed we should jointly publish a shilling book, a collection of metrical stories. I was delighted at the idea, and at once set about collecting all my floating verse and writing more; Smedley did the same; publishers—they gave us, I think, *20l.*—were found in the then newly-established firm of Messrs. George Routledge & Co., in Farringdon Street—one of the partners, William Warne, long since dead, was especially kind to me; and in November, "*Mirth and Metre*, by two Merry Men: Frank E. Smedley and Edmund H. Yates," was presented to the public. This little book, funnily illustrated by William McConnell, had a very fair success. Some parodies of mine on Tennyson, Longfellow, Poe, and others, were mightily popular, and are still, I see, from time to time, reproduced in "Collections." The press notices were very good, and altogether I was more than well satisfied.

Just about this time I obtained more journalistic employment through my friend, Mr. T. Knox Holmes, who had some share in the *Weekly Chronicle*, a journal of modest circulation, the principal distinction of which was that its title was printed in red ink. Its editor and proprietor, Mr. John Sheehan,

known as the "Irish whisky-drinker," was in Paris at the time, and his *locum tenens* was Mr. J. R. Robinson, now the well-known manager of the *Daily News*, who received me with great kindness, and with whom I contracted an intimate friendship, which still exists. The remuneration was small, but the work was pleasant. I supplied dramatic criticism, and a column of "literary and artistic gossip," my first attempt at anything of the kind.

As my family and my work were both increasing, I found it necessary to give up my little house, and to seek for larger and more accessible quarters—nearer, that is to say, to the theatres and Fleet Street, the journalistic Mecca. I found them in Doughty Street, close by the Foundling Hospital, a locality not unknown to literary fame. Sydney Smith had lived there; Shirley Brooks was born there; at No. 48 Charles Dickens resided for some time, writing there a great portion of *Pickwick*. I lived at 43, and opposite to me was Mr. Tegg, the publisher, a name familiar since my childhood as that of the firm by which the delightful *Peter Parley* series of juvenile books was issued. It was a broad, airy, wholesome street—none of your common thoroughfares, to be rattled through by vulgar cabs and earth-shaking Pickford's vans; but a self-included property, with a gate at each end, and a lodge with a porter in a gold-laced hat and the Doughty arms on the buttons of his mulberry-coloured coat, to prevent any one, except with a mission to one of the houses, from intruding on the exclusive territory.

The rent was seventy pounds a year, "on a repairing lease" (which means an annual outlay of from five-and-twenty to thirty pounds to keep the bricks and mortar and timbers together), and the accommodation consisted of a narrow dining-room painted salmon-colour, and a little back-room looking out upon a square black enclosure in which grew fearful fungi; two big drawing-rooms, the carpeting of which nearly swallowed a quarter's income; two good bedrooms, and three attics. I never went into the basement save when I visited the cellar,

which was a mouldy vault under the street pavement, only accessible through the area, and consequently rendering any one going to it liable to the insults of rude boys, who would grin through the area-railings, and make ribald remarks; but I believe the kitchen was pronounced by the servants to be "stuffy," and the whole place "ill-conwenient," there being no larder, pantry, nor the usual domestic arrangements. I know, too, that we were supposed to breed and preserve a very magnificent specimen of the blackbeetle: insects which migrated to different parts of the house in droves, and which, to the number of five-and-twenty, being met slowly ascending the drawing-room stairs, caused me to invest money in a hedgehog—an animal that took up his abode in the coal-cellar on the top of the coals, and, retiring thither early one morning after a surfeit of beetles, was supposed to have been inadvertently "laid" in the fire by the cook in mistake for a lump of Wallsend.

I don't think there were many advantages in the Doughty Street house (though I was very happy there, and had an immense amount of fun and pleasure), beyond the proximity to my work, and the consequent saving in cab-hire and fatigue. But I do recollect the drawbacks; and although many years have elapsed since I experienced them, they are constantly rising in my mind. I remember our being unable ever to open any window without an immediate inroad of "blacks": triturated soot of the most penetrating kind, which at once made piebald all the antimacassars, toilet-covers, counterpanes, towels, and other linen; I remember our being unable to get any sleep after 5 A.M., when, at the builder's which abutted on our back enclosure, a tremendous bell clanged, summoning the workmen to labour, and from which time there was such a noise of sawing and hammering, and planing and filing, and tool-grinding and bellows-blowing, interpersed with strange bellowings in the Celtic tongue from one Irish labourer to another, and mingled with objurgations in pure Saxon from irate foremen, that one might as well have attempted a quiet

nap in the neighbourhood of Babel when the tower was in course of erection.

I remember the hot summer Sunday afternoons, when the pavement would be red-hot, and the dust, and bits of straw, and scraps of paper would blow fitfully about with every little puff of air, and the always dull houses would look infinitely duller with their blinds down, and no sound would fall upon the ear save the distant hum of the cabs in Holborn, or the footfall of some young person in service going to afternoon church—or to its substitute—in all the glory of open-worked stockings, low shoes, and a prayer-book swaddled in a white cotton pocket-handkerchief. I have sat at my window on scores of such Sundays, eyeing the nose of Lazarus over the dwarf Venetian blind opposite, or the gorgeous waistcoat of Eliason, a little higher up (for the Tribes are great in the neighbourhood). I have stared upwards to catch a glimpse of the scrap of blue unclouded sky, visible above the houses; and then I have thought of Richmond Hill; of snowy tablecloths, and cool Moselle-cup, and flounder-zootje, in a room overlooking the river at the Orkney Arms, at Taplow; of that sea-breeze which passes the little hotel at Freshwater Bay, in wild hurry to make play over the neighbouring downs; of shaded walks, and cool retreats, and lime avenues, and overhung bathing-places, and all other things delicious at that season; until I have nearly gone mad with hatred of the stifling streets, and fancied myself pretty able to comprehend the feelings of the Polar bears in their dull retrogressive promenade in the Zoological Gardens.

That none of our friends had ever heard of Doughty Street; that no cabman could be instructed as to its exact whereabout, naming it generally as "somewhere near the Fondlin';" that migration to a friend's house in a habitable region to dinner occasioned an enormous expense in cab-fare; that all the tradesmen with whom we had previously dealt declined our custom, "as they never sent that way;" that we found Tottenham Court Road a line of demarcation, behind which we left

light and sunshine—on our side of which we tumbled into dulness and gloom; that we were in the midst of a hansom-cab colony, clattering home at all hours of the night; and in the immediate neighbourhood of all the organ-men, who gave us their final grind just before midnight: all these were minor but irritating annoyances. However, I lived there for nearly six busy, and for the most part happy and prosperous, years, during which "red-hot youth cooled down to iron man," and which were to me full of more or less interesting incident.

Early in the spring of 1855 Mr. Angus Bethune Reach, one of the best and brightest of the younger writers of the day—his romance, *Clement Lorimer*, and his *Claret and Olives*, travels through the wine-producing districts of France, are still capital reading—became, through an attack of softening of the brain, wholly incapable of further self-help. For months previous, and as long as there was a chance of his recovery, his regular work had been duly performed by his intimate friend Shirley Brooks, and the proceeds as duly handed to the sick man's wife. Mr. Reach's case was now, however, pronounced hopeless, and his friends cast about for some means of procuring a lump sum of money to be appropriated to his benefit.

The notion of performing an amateur pantomime originated with Albert Smith, who knew that in "Joe" Robins there were all the requisites of an extraordinary Clown; we found a Harlequin in Mr. John Bidwell of the Foreign Office, a singularly graceful and agile dancer; Arthur Smith was Pantaloon; while for me the character of the "Lover," the person who is Harlequin's unsuccessful rival in Columbine's affections—common in Grimaldi's day, but since abandoned—was revived. We placed ourselves under the tuition of the celebrated Mr. W. H. Payne, the king of pantomime, who, with his two excellent sons, "Harry" and "Fred," devoted himself to us. We worked for six weeks, in all our available leisure, at rehearsals; and we performed on Saturday, March 31, 1855, at the Olympic Theatre. A true appreciation of our extraordinary success can best be obtained by a perusal of the admirable

critique in the *Times* of the following Monday, written by John Oxenford in his most delightful vein :

OLYMPIC THEATRE.

AMATEUR PERFORMANCE.

Theatrical amateurs usually soar high. For tragedy they have an instinctive preference, and if they descend to comedy, it must be of the most special kind, so that the temporary fall from that exalted position which all amateurs are supposed (socially, not artistically) to hold may be as slight as possible.

But who ever heard of an amateur pantomime—not, be it understood, one of those pantomimes of action which set forth a fable in dumbshow instead of words—but a real ordinary pantomime, with an amateur Harlequin, Clown, and Pantaloon?

When first the words "Amateur Pantomime" were put about they seemed irreconcilable terms, like "round square," or "wooden loadstone;" they seemed to denote a moral and physical impossibility. The supposed moral impossibility resulted from that dignity at which we have hinted as an inherent quality in amateurs. "No young man of noble birth or liberal sentiments," says Plutarch, "from seeing the Jupiter at Pisa, would desire to be Phidias; or, from the sight of the Juno at Argos, to be Polycletus; or Anacreon, or Philemon, or Archilochus, though delighted with their poems." Plutarch's notions of high art were high indeed, for they excluded all sculpture and poetry, however ideal; and amateurs, though they cannot go this length (otherwise they would even cease to be amateurs), have still certain Plutarchian elements in their composition. They would modify the sweeping declaration into a special contempt for "low art," and so far dilute the doctrine as simply to maintain that he who applauds the Boxing Night anthem entitled "Hot Codlins" should not therefore desire to sing it, and that a successful leap of Harlequin through a window, though it may excite wonder in the dress circle, should not therefore rouse emulation.

More potent still seemed the objection of physical impossibility. Professional pantomimists are, in a manner, born to the business, and setting all questions of dignity aside, how could a head that had merely served as a case to hold brains be converted into a pedestal for the support of the inverted body? how could the mysteries of a somersault be solved by a frame only inured to the

most stately conventional movements? Moreover, the penalty of non-success in pantomime is somewhat severe. A failure in Hamlet can, at the most, only subject an unhappy man to the pleasantries of his acquaintance, while the Clown, who plucks no histrionic laurels, may literally break his neck in the attempt.

However, notwithstanding all reasonings on the score of impossibility, the report that an amateur pantomime was in course of rehearsal at the Olympic Theatre was not to be shaken. It remained as a good, firm report, with a strong constitution, till at last it took the shape of a regular fact. Somehow or other, certainly not by way of official communication, all the world suddenly knew that the "Fielding Club" (an institution famed for the brilliancy of its wit and the lateness of its hours), having generously made up its mind to assist a most deserving literary gentleman, who is now in distressed circumstances, had hit upon a scheme at once efficient and eccentric. The gentlemen of the "Fielding Club," with Mr. Albert Smith as their chief, were to play the comic pantomime of *Harlequin Guy Fawkes* at the Olympic Theatre.

The excitement produced by the possession of this knowledge was wonderful. To prevent crowd and inconvenience, a comparatively small quantity of tickets was issued; but large, indeed, was the number of applicants, and all sorts of legends are afloat respecting the prices given for stalls and boxes.

On Saturday—an evening long to be remembered in dramatic annals—the promised treat was given. The audience, which contained a more than ordinary proportion of literary celebrities, and was altogether of the most refined and brilliant kind, seemed actually oppressed by the weight of expectation. The farce of *My Neighbour's Wife* commenced the business of the evening, and the amateurs were laughed at as each made his appearance. But the laugh soon died away, and the look of anxious expectation returned. What is an amateur farce to a public that has come to see an amateur pantomime?

The great solemnity was ushered in by a prologue, the work of Mr. Sunderland Schneider—psha! of Mr. Tom Taylor. Part of the humour of the evening consisted in the odd names which the performers gave themselves in the programme; but we need not keep up this part of the joke. Everybody in the house knew every principal actor on the stage, or, at any rate, sat next to somebody

who did, and, therefore, no secrecy was gained by such names as "Paul Grave" or "Mountain White." A Sphinx is no mystery in a land where every inhabitant is an Œdipus, and, as we do not choose to appear more ignorant than all the rest of our fellow-citizens, we break through the very thin gauze formed by the appellations in the bills, and mention real names.

The prologue, then, which was spoken by Mr. Cole, in the character of Shakespeare, Mr. Palgrave Simpson as the "Present Drama," and Miss Oliver as the Spirit of Pantomime, and aimed at a sort of amicable settlement of the differences that exist between the "slow" and "fast" factions, was the work of Mr. Tom Taylor. Abounding in pleasant allusions, and tastefully ending with a reference to the charitable object of the performance, this prologue delighted everybody as a choicely-written work, alike happy in its gayer and its graver tone.

But the prologue was not the pantomime. Other amateurs might have spoken Mr. Taylor's pointed dialogue, but the great question of amateur harlequinade was yet unsolved. Again did the grave expectant mood return.

The overture was played, and then—awful moment—the curtain rose, and showed the "Vaults below the Houses of Parliament." Barrels of gunpowder were heaped around, and on one of these sat Mr. Albert Smith, as Catesby, attired in ancient fashion and smoking a pipe. He introduced the action by singing one of those rapid songs in which he has only one rival (viz. Mr. C. Mathews), and thus lyrically giving a *précis* of so much English history as was connected with the fable. The audience thundered applause; but even now there was no wonder, for the fact that Mr. Albert Smith is a capital comic singer is known to all the world. It was when Mr. Holmes entered, in the dress of Guy Fawkes, and bowed his forehead down to his toes, with all that freedom from bone which is peculiar to pantomimic art, that the new sensation was produced.* Yes! people really began to believe that an amateur pantomime was possible.

A great weight was, therefore, removed from the mind, which became keenly susceptible of enjoyment. A parody on an Italian

* Mr. T. K. Holmes still preserves his strength and agility. Born in 1808, he, on September 30th, 1884, rode a tricycle over one hundred and fifteen miles within ten consecutive hours, only dismounting once for five minutes!

air, admirably sung by Mr. Holmes, was loudly applauded, and the statement of the Lord Monteagle of King James's time that he was "Lord Monteagle, formerly Spring Rice," elicited roars of mirth. But the cream of the introduction was the terrific combat between Catesby and Fawkes, in which Messrs. Smith and Holmes went through all those conventional *poses* that earned immortality in those good old days when the Coburg had not yet taken the name of the Victoria.

The introduction was comprised in a single scene, and, according to a common modern practice, the actors of the harlequinade were not the same with those of the story. When the moment of "transformation" arrived, and the Spirit of the Thames, enacted by Miss Martindale, told Catesby to change into Harlequin, the old nervousness of the audience returned once more. What they had hitherto seen showed grotesque talent, it was true, but, after all, it was only the "little go" of the affair; the difficulties of Clownery and Pantaloonery had yet to be surmounted, and a breakdown was yet upon the cards.

Most efficiently were these fears dispelled by the first entrance of the chief characters. Mr. Bidwell looked as much like a real Harlequin as any that ever sparkled at Christmas; Mr. Arthur Smith was a thorough Pantaloon; Mr. Edmund Yates was an unexceptionable lover; and Mr. J. Robins was an ordinary—no, he was not, he was an extraordinary—Clown; for, with his stout figure, his fat face, and the expression of quiet humour in his eyes and mouth, he gave a taste of that quality which playgoers of thirty years' standing may recollect in Grimaldi, but of which modern *habitués* of the theatre know but little. The Columbine was, of course, professional, and a more excellent Columbine could not have been obtained than Miss Rosina Wright.

In the various scenes of the harlequinade the amateurs were successively put to every test of pantomimic art, excepting that talent for posture-making which is a modern innovation, and passed victoriously through them all. The business-like manner in which they executed all the conventional movements, supposed to be the exclusive property of a small body of professional artists, was really amazing. The audience could scarcely believe that Harlequin was in earnest when he prepared to leap through a wall; but he was so notwithstanding, and, if he was not quite glib the first time, he went through the scene like a shot whenever he repeated the

exploit. It could scarcely be expected that amateurs would interchange those violent assaults which make up so much of the comic business of pantomime, but never did Clown and Pantaloon belabour each other more heartily, or tumble down with more formidable truthfulness, than Mr. J. Robins and Mr. Arthur Smith. The audience, inspired by the triumph of the performers, at last forgot that they were amateurs altogether, and shouted aloud for "Hot Codlins." The new test was gallantly accepted, and Mr. J. Robins sang the famous legend of the "little old woman" with all contortions of voice and countenance that would have satisfied the most rigid judge of pantomimic proprieties. Nor should we, while recording the excellence of the principal characters, forget the accessories. A series of burlesque *poses plastiques*, executed by Messrs. Holmes, Ibbetson, and Hallett, in the dress of acrobats, were inimitably comic; and, scarcely less so was the performance of Mr. E. Yates, who, as a careful tight-rope dancer, chalked a line upon the ground, and upon that instead of a real cord, went through all the business of actual peril and precaution. Mr. Albert Smith, too, reappeared in the harlequinade, dressed as a showman, and sang the late Mr. Mathews's song of the "Country Fair," with several modifications of his own. Some exceedingly clever balancing tricks were done by a gentleman who seemed to be unknown to the generality of the audience; but Mr. Albert Smith, who was on the stage during the feats, called out that he was an amateur.

The fall of the curtain was the signal for shouts of applause and calls for the principal actors, and, as the audience left the theatre, one declaration might be plainly heard from many lips, "This is the best pantomime I ever saw in my life."

The results of this performance enabled us to provide for the comfort of our friend in his last days (he died within twelve months), and the fame of it reached the ears of Royalty. The consequence was a command to repeat the pantomime in the presence of the Queen and the Prince Consort—a command which we obeyed shortly afterwards at Drury Lane Theatre, with enormous success, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, then a lad of fourteen, taking especial delight in the performance. The large receipts were handed, at her Majesty's suggestion, to

the Royal Naval Female School—an admirable institution, which, in gratitude for the bounty of the Fielding Club, made three of its committee-men life governors, the privileges of which position I still enjoy. A large addition to the funds of Wellington College—the proceeds of the performance of the amateur pantomime, with a different "opening," in the June of the following year—did not, if I remember rightly, elicit anything but a bare expression of thanks. In the second amateur pantomime Mr. Bidwell's place as Harlequin was filled by Mr. Samuel Brandram, now so well known as an exponent of Shakespeare.

On the 9th June, 1855, was published the first number of the *Illustrated Times*, and about ten days after, having heard that its principal proprietor was Mr. Bogue, I called upon him and asked for employment. In reply to his question of what I proposed doing, I developed a little scheme which seemed to please him, and which he bade me go at once and talk over with Mr. Henry Vizetelly, the editor. Mr. Vizetelly, a thoroughly sharp and practical business man in journalism, wholly unhampered by conventionality or precedent, was amused and perhaps somewhat impressed with my idea, and desired me to write him a specimen article, which was published in the number for the 30th June, with the title "The Lounger at the Clubs." This was the commencement of that style of "personal" journalism which is so very much to be deprecated and so enormously popular. Into the vexed question of how far such style of writing is permissible, of the good or harm that it does, I am certainly not going to enter here. I only know that for six or seven years I kept up a continuous comment on the social, literary, and dramatic events of the day; and it was, I believe, Mr. Vizetelly's opinion that my flippant nonsense did as much for the sale of the paper as the deeper and drier wisdom of my colleagues. If, as I am given to understand, a prominent attraction of *The World* is, to the majority of its readers, "What the World Says," unquestionably that article had its origin and foundation in "The Lounger at the Clubs;"

and I can never cease to be grateful to Mr. Henry Vizetelly for the unswerving kindness with which he supported me, an unknown struggler, in those early days, against a powerful clique. Many of the rising men of the day—George Sala, Robert Brough, James Hannay, Frederick Greenwood, Sutherland Edwards, Augustus Mayhew, Edward Draper—were on the staff of the little paper, which did well—so well that the proprietor of its big predecessor found it necessary to purchase it, and thenceforward to let it fly with partially-clipped wings.

Visiting relations had, in the meantime, been established between us and the Dickens family, and we were invited to Tavistock House, on the 18th of June, to witness the performance of Wilkie Collins's drama, *The Lighthouse*, in which the author and Dickens, Frank Stone, Augustus Egg, Mark Lemon, and the ladies of the family took part. My mother, who went with us, told me that Dickens, in intensity, reminded her of Lemaître in his best days. I was much struck by the excellence of Lemon's acting, which had about it no trace of the amateur. At the performance my mother was seated next a tall grey-haired gentleman—a most pleasant talker, she said—who proved to be Mr. Gilbert a'Beckett, the magistrate and wit; and in the drawing-room afterwards there was a warm greeting between her and Lady Becher, formerly Miss O'Neil, whom she had not seen for many years. It was a great night for my mother. She renewed her acquaintance with Stanfield and Roberts, and was addressed in very complimentary terms by the great John Forster. Thackeray and his daughters, Leech, Jerrold, Lord Campbell, and Carlyle were there.

On the 27th September in this year twin-sons were born to me. Two days later, being at the Garrick and seeing Thackeray there, I asked him for an autograph for a book which I had just established. He sat down at once, and wrote the following:

"Michaelmas Day, 1855.

My dear Yates,—Am I to condole with, or congratulate, you, on the announcement in to-day's paper? May every year increase your happiness, and good fortune attend your increase! I know I

am writing in an affected manner, as you are pleased to desire my autograph. I assure the friend for whom it is destined that I am quite incapable of being funny on a sudden, easily abashed, of a modest retiring disposition, forty-four years old, and—Yours truly, my dear Yates,

W. M. THACKERAY.

P.S.—The T of the signature I do not think is near so elegant as my ordinary T's are; in fact, my attention was drawn off just as I was turning it.

E. YATES, Esq. (Private and confidential.)"

Owing to these domestic arrangements, my holiday this year was taken late, and passed at Brighton, where I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Madame Sala, mother of Mr. G. A. Sala, a most entertaining and charming woman. The twin-sons throve; and when it became a question of their christening, I wrote to Dickens, who was wintering in Paris, and asked if he would act as sponsor to one of them. Here is his reply:

"Paris, 49 Avenue des Champs Elysées,
Wednesday, Second January 1856.

My dear Yates,—Supposing both Corsican Brothers to be available, I think I should prefer being godfather to the one who isn't Kean. With this solitary stipulation, I very cordially respond to your proposal, and am happy to take my friendly and sponsorial seat at your fireside.

I will write you word when I propose making another flight to London, for I must come and see my boy, whether we fill the sparkling wine-cup (when I was in America, an editor wrote me a note of invitation, begging me to come and 'crush' that article with him) or not.

When you represent me at the font, and are renouncing, think that on Christmas Day I had seven sons in the banquet-hall of this apartment—which would not make a very large warm bath—and renounce my example.

Mrs. Dickens and Miss Hogarth unite with me in kind regards to yourself and Mrs. Yates, as to whom I now consider myself, with much pleasure, a sort of relation.

Very faithfully yours,
CHARLES DICKENS."

The boys were christened shortly afterwards, Dickens being godfather to one, and Frank Smedley to the other.

I had seen Dickens twice before his departure for Paris—once when he presided over a dinner given to Thackeray, immediately before his departure for America, at which, through the kindness of Peter Cunningham, who acted as honorary secretary, I managed to be present. It was a most interesting occasion, and Dickens, in proposing the toast of the evening, spoke with much eloquence. Thackeray, too, was plainly moved, so much so that his reply was very short; he tried to pass off his emotion with some joke about the coming voyage and the steward, but it was too much for him. Dickens left early, and Jerrold was voted to the chair; whence he made a speech, proposing the health of Shirley Brooks, as the "most rising journalist of the day." Brooks at that time had but recently joined the *Punch* staff. He had literally fought his way on to it, and by the vigour of his onslaught on the quasi-comic journal, and specially on Jerrold himself, had compelled his recognition and absorption. With the exception of Bunn's memorable "Word with *Punch*," a poem written by Brooks, and published in the *Man in the Moon*, called "Our Flight with *Punch*," was the most telling attack ever made on Messrs. Bradbury and Evans's property. Thus it commenced:

"Up, up, thou dreary Hunchback! Ere her diamond stud, the sun,
Stick in Aurora's habit-shirt, there's business must be done.
The saucy stars are winking at the planets on their beat:
Up! thou hast grovelled long and low—a change will be a treat!"

Punch is then sharply trounced for his sneers at loyalty, religion, and the upper classes, for his "scandal random-flung," for his ignorance of fair play; then come three of the best stanzas:

"Back! foolish Hunchback, to the course that whilome made thy fame,
Back! to thy lawful quarry, to thy Jove-appointed game:
Shoot folly as it flies; but shoot it with the arrowy joke,
Not with a brazen blunderbuss, all bellow and black smoke.

Give us, once more, the playful wit that notched the legal saw,
That sparkles o'er Hume's *History* now, as once o'er Blackstone's law:
Give us the truthful social sketch, drawn by Titmarshian skill,
With colour bright as Dickens's, and pencil keener still.

Give us the shower of quip and crank, the whimsy and the wile,
Murder vain Fashion's shapeless brood, but murder with a smile.
Poison the rats of Westminster with Hamlet's 'poisoned jest,'
And stab as once Harmodius stabbed, with steel in myrtle dressed."

Admirable as these verses are, they were not, oddly enough, included in the posthumous collection of Shirley Brooks's poems, published by Messrs. Bradbury and Evans. Brooks lived not only to be a leading contributor to *Punch*, but its editor; he was virtual editor during Mark Lemon's later years, and at Lemon's death obtained the post. Excellent in every department of journalism, to the *Punch* proprietary he was simply invaluable: he was the only man on the staff with much knowledge of current politics; his fertility in cartoon-suggestion was extraordinary; he could write verse and prose with almost equal facility; and so vast was his newspaper-reading that he never missed a noticeable point, not merely in the London, but in the provincial press.

The other occasion on which I had been with Dickens in the latter days of '55 was memorable to me as the first of very many subsequent delightful nights, passed among odd scenes in close intimacy with him. We went on what would nowadays be called a "slumming" expedition, quite original in those days, but long since done to death. A friend of Dickens's, a certain M. Delarue, a banker in Genoa, who was on a visit to Tavistock House, had a great desire to see some of the low life of London; and Dickens accordingly arranged with the police for a party of us, of which I was one, to dine early together, and then "go the rounds" of the thieves' quarters in Whitechapel, the sailors' and German sugar-bakers' taverns in Ratcliff Highway, the dens of the Mint, etc. It was a curious experience, but the interest of it to me was greatly increased by the fact that I was in the company of the man whose genius I had

worshipped so long and so ardently; and when he called me into the cab, and we returned alone together, he chatting freely and charmingly, I wondered whether Fate could have in store for me greater distinction or delight.

Meantime I had had opportunities for increasing my literary work. The proprietors of the *Illustrated London Magazine*, a somewhat obscure periodical, having asked Frank Smedley to write them a novel, he managed to have the commission transferred to me, of course at a much lower remuneration, and I commenced a serial story called "Arthur Hargrave, or the Uniform of Foolscap," of which I do not remember much, save that it did not run very long, expiring with the magazine. The "London Correspondent's" letter for the *Inverness Courier*, the property of Dr. Carruthers, and one of the most important of northern journals, which had been originally written by Angus Reach, and afterwards by Shirley Brooks, was made over to me, and was for years a regular, if small, source of income. More important in every way was the offer I received from Mr. J. R. Robinson, my former colleague on the *Weekly Chronicle*, who had now become editor of the *Express*, the then evening edition of the *Daily News*, to do some work for him, and occasionally, when an extra hand was wanted, to write a dramatic criticism for the last-named journal. There was, of course, a regular dramatic critic, but he was of a somewhat erratic habit, and Mr. Robinson promised, in case the post became vacant, to use his best endeavours to get me appointed. As it happened, I had only had the occasional employment during some twelve months, when the regular critic, who suffered from heart-disease, fell dead in the street; and after a little interval, during which trial was made of the services of a gentleman who had certain influence with the proprietors, but who failed to give satisfaction, I was permanently employed on the staff of the *Daily News*.

This appointment made me supremely happy. The salary was four pounds a week, for which I was to undertake the whole of the dramatic criticism, and to assist in the book-

reviewing. Any other articles were separately paid for. Taken in connection with my Post Office work and my other journalistic engagements, this new berth completely filled up my time. Of course there were not nearly so many theatres as there are now; but the changes in the playbills, and consequently the necessity of attendance, were much more frequent, and I was kept constantly supplied with books for notice. Literature of the lightest kind was generally assigned to me; but I must have had books of all sorts sent, as among my *Daily News* reviews, which I have preserved, I find long notices of Charlotte Brontë's *Professor* and of Aytoun's *Bothwell.** When the

* Here is a funny story in connection with this. My friend John Hollingshead, who would occasionally help me with my book-notices, once asked me what I knew about Pope. I replied, I knew the *Rape of the Lock*, *Essay on Man*, *Universal Prayer*, etc. But what did I know of Pope's life, friends, surroundings? Nothing, I frankly answered; why did he ask? Because an important book, Carruthers's *Life of Pope*, would shortly be published. A friend of his, Hollingshead's, was, with perhaps one exception, the best-informed Pope man in the world; and if I would hand over the book, this friend should write the notice; but it was to be sent in with my notices, and nothing was to be said as to whose work it was. The friend proved to be William Moy Thomas. The book was duly sent to him, and duly returned with a long and admirable review, full of special knowledge, which I forwarded with my "copy" as usual. It appeared the next day. I took care not to go near the office, but heard that Mr. Weir, the editor, was wonder-struck at its evidence of thorough acquaintance with the subject. But there was some one else who was also struck in the same manner. This was the "perhaps one exception" mentioned by Hollingshead—none other than Mr. Charles Wentworth Dilke, grandfather of the present baronet, ex-editor of the *Athenæum*, who knew everything possible about Pope and his times. Moy Thomas had been his secretary and quasi-pupil: they had had long and frequent discussions on Pope matters; consequently, directly Mr. Dilke saw the *Daily News* notice, he guessed who had written it. But so much interest did he take in the subject that he set off for the newspaper office, and saw his old friend Weir. Of him, after praising the review, he asked who wrote it. "Quite a young man of the name of Yates," he was informed. Impossible! no young man of such a name could have half so much special knowledge. There was only one man in London could have written it. Well, the book was sent to Yates, and the review came from him; that

theatrical season was over, I wrote for the *Daily News* a series of semi-personal, semi-professional sketches of the principal London players, and a long description of society at Baden, whither my wife and I had gone, in company with Albert Smith, who took that place and the Rhine as his new route to Mont Blanc.

We were a very happy and united body at the *Daily News* office, and from my employers and colleagues I received the greatest kindness and consideration. Sometimes I was invited to one of the weekly "house-dinners" held at the Rainbow or Dick's, in Fleet Street, where I would find our principal proprietor, Mr. George Smith, a lawyer of Golden Square, who did not afterwards prove quite such a clever man of business as he had been reckoned; Mr. Weir, our chief editor—kindest, dearest, and deafest of Scotch gentlemen; Mr. Thomas Walker, the sub-editor; Mr. Robinson, editor of the evening edition; and some of the leader-writers, generally Mr. McCullagh Torrens, Mr.—now Sir Joseph—Arnould, and Mr.—now Professor—Baynes. Among the members of the staff were Mr. George Hogarth, the musical critic, father of Mrs. Dickens; Mr. Lincoln, the secretary; Mr. Copping and Mr. Dyer, sub-editors; Mr. Murphy, an Irish gallery-man and reporter, exact prototype of Thackeray's Hoolan and Doolan; Mr. Godfrey Turner; and, later on, Mr. Pigott. There was also a foreign sub-editor, whose name I forget—a very eccentric person. He was supposed to be a great linguist; but he remains in my mind for his great contempt and hatred of Dickens, a subject on which he was always enlarging. So profound was this contempt that he would never mention Dickens by name: he used to allude to him as "that fellow, you know—Hogarth's son-in-law!"

On the 7th May, 1856, I made my first appearance in *House-*

was all the editor could say. Mr. Dilke pretended to be convinced; but, having been himself formerly editor of the *Daily News*, he knew the master-printer, through whom he got a glimpse of the MS., and satisfied himself he was right.

hold Words, with a short story called "A Fearful Night," and, encouraged by Dickens and by the assistant editor, William Henry Wills, who, from that time to the day of his death, was one of my best friends, I became a frequent contributor. About the same time, too, Messrs. Routledge published *Our Miscellany*, a collection of prose and verse sketches, contributed by Robert Brough and myself to various magazines, with a cover, on which the authors were admirably caricatured by C. H. Bennett.

My first essay in dramatic writing, in collaboration with a Post Office friend named Harrington, was a riotous and ridiculous, but at the same time an exceedingly funny, farce called *A Night at Notting Hill*, the theme being the burglaries at the time prevalent in that suburb, which was produced at the Adelphi in the early days of January, 1857. Harrington, who had been a professional actor, was well up to the requirements of the stage, and we scored a distinct success. Wright, as an alderman, terrified at the notion of having his house broken into, was exceedingly comic, and he was well seconded by Paul Bedford as a Life Guardsman, hired to protect the premises. The press were heartily unanimous in their reception of this trifle, which had a run of over a hundred nights. Emboldened by our success, my partner and I at once went to work on another farce, which we read to Mr. J. L. Toole, whose acquaintance I had made a year or two before, when I went with Albert Smith to the Walworth Institution, and heard Mr. Toole, then an amateur, give a very funny entertainment. He had now made his mark as a professional comedian, and was playing at the Lyceum, under the management of Mr. Charles Dillon.

Mr. Toole received our farce very favourably, and recommended it to his manager, by whom it was accepted. It was called *My Friend from Leatherhead*, and was produced on the 23rd February, 1857, with Mr. Toole as the hero, while a small part of a lady's-maid was made conspicuous by the excellent way in which it was filled by Miss M. Wilton—now Mrs. Ban-

croft. When I saw, next morning, that Oxenford had given us a notice of full half a column in the *Times*, I had no doubt of our success. During the next few years, always in conjunction with Harrington, I wrote several successful farces: a comedietta, called *If the Cap Fits*, the last piece produced by Mr. Charles Kean in his management of the Princess's, was of a different *genre*, of neater construction, and more polished dialogue. It was admirably acted by, among others, Mr. Frank Matthews, Mr. Walter Lacy, and—Miss Ellen Terry, soon after she entered the profession: she played a juvenile groom, a "tiger," with great spirit and vivacity. One of the "entertainments" given at the Gallery of Illustration, about this time, by Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, was also from my pen.

Early in June this year ('57) England lost one of her wittiest sons—Douglas Jerrold. Though never intimate with him, I had often been in his company, and had heard him flash forth the biting epigram and quick repartee for which in our day he has had no rival. A small delicately-formed bent man, with long grey hair combed back from his forehead, with grey eyes deep set under penthouse brows, and a way, just as the inspiration seized him, of dangling a double eyeglass, which hung round his neck by a broad black ribbon: a kindly man for all his bitter tongue, replying most courteously to a complaint against one of his staff, which I brought before him years ago, and taking care that justice was done: soft and easy with women and children.

Years before, I had been one of a party which had escorted him, after the successful production of one of his comedies—*The Catspaw*, I think—to the Bedford Hotel in Covent Garden, where supper was prepared. Jerrold was flushed with triumph; but his bodily strength was small, and he hung on to my arm. As we went up New Street, we met two or three drunken roysterers, one of whom, after tumbling up against me, apologized, and asked "the way to the Judge and Jury," a popular entertainment of the day. Instantly Jerrold bent forward and addressed him: "Straight on, young man.

Continue in the path you're now pursuing, and you can't fail to come to them!" It was to Peter Cunningham, mentioning his fondness of calves' feet, that Jerrold said, "Extremes meet;" to Mrs. Alfred Wigan, expressing her fear that her hair had been turned grey by the application of some strong stimulant, he said, "I know—essence of thyme!" He was brought to the Fielding Club once as a guest, and was sitting there when the door opened, and Albert Smith appeared. "Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains!" cried some one, in would-be facetious salutation. "Yes," said Jerrold, "and Albert 'half-crowned him long ago!'"

In the spring of the year in which Jerrold died, Mr. Benjamin Webster had a pleasant gathering of friends at his quaint old house by Kennington Church, to celebrate the birthday of his daughter. Jerrold was there, playing whist; in the adjoining room they were dancing. Touching him on the shoulder, I asked, "Who is that man, Jerrold, there, dancing with Mrs. Jerrold?" He looked round for an instant, through the open door. "God knows, my dear boy!" he replied: "some member of the Humane Society, I suppose!" The last time I saw him was little more than a week before his death, at a Sunday Greenwich dinner, given by W. H. Russell, at which Dickens, Delane, Mowbray Morris, Albert and Arthur Smith, and many others were present. Jerrold, who looked very ill, and told me he was having his house done up, and was "poisoned by the paint," had been brought down by Dickens in the steamer. He was very *piano*, and I heard him attempt only one joke: when Russell asked Albert Smith to ring the bell for dinner, Jerrold said, "Yes, Albert, why don't you ring that bell(e)?" in allusion to rumours then rife of an engagement between A. S. and Miss Keeley, whom he afterwards married. Jerrold went away early, took to his bed, and died on the Monday week.

On the morning of the funeral I had a letter from Dickens, asking me to dine at the Garrick, as he wanted to talk to me on a matter of business. I went, and found Albert and Arthur

Smith of the party. They had all been to the ceremony at Norwood in the morning, and Dickens spoke very strongly of the fuss and flourish with which it had been conducted. The mourners, it seemed, wore bands of crape with the initials "D. J." round their arms, and there was a funeral-car, of which Dickens declared he heard one old woman in the crowd say to another that it was "just like the late Dook o' Wellinton's." After dinner we had pens, ink, and paper, and Dickens unfolded his scheme, which was to raise a fund for the benefit of Jerrold's widow and family.

It was to be done in the most delicate manner, and all would assist. Thackeray would lecture, so would W. H. Russell; Dickens would give a reading; there would be a performance of *Black-Eyed Susan* at the Adelphi, with the veteran T. P. Cooke in his original character; a performance of the Dickens troupe of amateurs in *The Frozen Deep*, etc. One great point was to let the public know what was intended instantly, whilst Jerrold's death was fresh in their minds; another, not to spend too much money in advertising. With the view of combining these *desiderata*, Dickens drew up a short memorandum for the committee, which he asked me to take round that night to the editors of the principal journals, requesting them to publish it in the morning, with a few introductory lines of their own.

I had some curious experiences that evening. I first went to the *Morning Post*, where I found Mr. (now Sir) Algernon Borthwick in evening clothes, with a smart smoking-jacket substituted for his dress-coat, a courteous gentleman, polished to his finger-tips. Thence to the *Morning Chronicle* in the Strand, opposite Somerset House, where, at the top of a flight of dirty stairs, in a typical newspaper-room, was the then editor —genial, jovial, handsome Thomas Littleton Holt, otherwise known as "Raggedy Holt"—in his shirt-sleeves, and with a foaming porter-pot before him. Next, to the *Daily Telegraph*, then in its infancy, a very modest establishment in the bend of the Strand, by St. Clement's Church, now pulled down, where

I was, of course, kindly received by my friend Mr. J. M. Levy. At the *Advertiser* Mr. James Grant would do all he was asked, save write the introductory lines, which he insisted on my doing then and there; and at the *Times* I saw Mr. Delane, who came out to me when he read Dickens's letter, though his presence at the office had been steadfastly denied.

The programme was carried out, in its entirety, with great success, the sum raised being, I think, over two thousand pounds. Thackeray's lecture was on "Weekday Preachers," in which he made special and admirable reference to Jerrold; and I have a remembrance of Dickens in connection with the performance of *Black-Eyed Susan* at the Adelphi, which always makes me laugh. The part of the Admiral, who presides over the court-martial by which the hero William is condemned to death, was played by a stolid-faced creature, a brother of Paul Bedford's. Dickens said to me at supper that night, "I had a strong idea that Bedford's brother meant to acquit William, and that all the rest of the play would go to the devil!"

As may be readily imagined, I had not very much leisure in the midst of all this employment, but such as I had was always pleasantly passed. Sundays with us were always "Sundays out"—at Skindle's, at that time a delightfully quiet place, with no lawn, no river-rooms, no neighbouring Guards' Club; at Thames Ditton; at Richmond; at the Swan at Staines; at Laker's Hotel at Redhill—sometimes my wife and I alone, oftener with the Keeleys and Albert and a party. On Friday nights there was always a gathering in Gower Street, at the house of Abraham Solomon, who had just made a hit with his picture "Waiting for the Verdict," where would be Millais with his "Huguenot" success upon him, young and handsome, as in the medallion which Alexander Munro had just completed of him; and Frith, putting the finishing touches to his "Derby Day;" Frank Stone, Augustus Egg, and Sant; Dutton Cook, undecided whether to take to pen or pencil as his means of living; Ernest Hart, whose sister Solomon afterwards married, and William Fenn. A quietly Bohemian evening: a little

dancing, a few games of "tonneau," a capital supper with a specialty of cold fish, then cigars, and singing by Frank Topham or Desanges, and imitations by Dillon Croker, "and so home."

Gatherings on a larger scale at Mr. Gambart's, the princely picture dealer, first in Berners Street, afterwards in the Regent's Park; dances at Mr. Jacob Bell's, admirably superintended by the host's *alter ego*, Mr. "Tom" Hills; frequent festivity in connection with the Mont Blanc entertainment;* and a general "good time."

* There was always a large gathering at the Egyptian Hall on the night preceding a change in the form of entertainment. There was a liberal supply of champagne: Mr. Rule, the well-known *écailler* of Maiden Lane, and his sons, presided over a long counter, and served out oysters and bread and butter; and hot baked potatoes were dispensed by a man described in the programme as "Tatur Khan." The style of invitation was always peculiar. I annex one, lithographed on thin paper, in passport form, which was issued to all intended guests in '55:

"We, Albert Smith, one of Her Britannic Majesty's representatives on the summit of Mont Blanc, Knight of the most noble order of the Grands Mulets, Baron Galignani of Piccadilly, Knight of the Grand Crossing from Burlington Arcade to the Egyptian Hall, Member of the Society for the Confusion of Useless Knowledge, Secretary for his own Affairs, etc., etc.

"Request and require, in the name of His Majesty the Monarch of Mountains, all those whom it may concern, more especially the Police on the Piccadilly Frontier, to allow —— to pass freely in at the street-door of the Egyptian Hall, and upstairs to the Mont Blanc Room, on the evening of Saturday, Dec. 1, 1855, at 8 P.M., and to afford him every assistance in the way of oysters, stout, champagne, soda and brandy, and other aid of which he may stand in need.

"Given at the Box-office, Piccadilly, 28th day of November 1855.

ALBERT SMITH.

"God save the Queen!

"*Vu au bureau de la Salle. Bon pour entrer Piccadilly, par l'Arcade de Burlington.* TRUEFITT.

"Samedi, 1st December 1855.

"*Visèed* for the Garrick and Fielding Clubs, the Vaults below the Houses of Parliament, Truefitt's Hair-cutting Saloon, the Glacier de Gunter, Jullien's, Laurent's, the Café de l'Europe, Pratt's, Limmer's, and all other places on the Rhine, between Rule's Marine Museum, or Appetising Aquarium, and the Jolly Grenadier public-house, No. 1 Ellison Square, Pall Mall, South Sebastopol. RULE.

Prominent amongst the houses to which we went most frequently, and where we were most heartily welcomed, was that of our neighbour in Doughty Street, Mr. J. M. Levy, who had just acquired the *Daily Telegraph* property, and was concentrating on it all his zeal, acumen, and experience to make his venture a success. He was ably seconded by his son Edward, who at that time wrote the dramatic criticisms amongst other work, and was consequently my constant companion at the theatre. The Sunday night *réunions* at Mr. Levy's are among my pleasantest reminiscences; but there was no time at which we were not received and treated as part of the family. It is always agreeable to me to think that I was enabled, incidentally, to do my friends real service by introducing to them two gentlemen, Mr. G. A. Sala and the Hon. F. Lawley, who have greatly contributed to the enormous success which the *Daily Telegraph* has attained.

The next year, 1858, was one of vast importance to me.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY EDITORSHIPS.

1855—1858.

It was in the summer of 1855, when I was twenty-four, and had been married about a couple of years, that I made my first acquaintance with the denizens of British Bohemia—that I became initiated into the mysteries of our equivalent for that *vie de Bohème* which half a century ago, despite its uncertainty, its poverty, and in many cases its misery, had, in its wild and picturesque freedom from conventionality, sufficient attraction to captivate a large section of the young men of Paris, and which found its brilliant historian in the unfortunate Henri Mürger. Our British Bohemia, as it existed in the days of which I am writing—I am doubtful whether it exists at all now —differed in many respects from that fanciful territory inhabited by Schaunard and his comrades. It was less picturesque, it was more practical and commonplace, perhaps a trifle more vulgar; but its denizens had this in common with their French prototypes—that they were young, gifted, and reckless; that they worked only by fits and starts, and never except under the pressure of necessity; that they were sometimes at the height of happiness, sometimes in the depths of despair, but that ordinarily they passed their lives

> "Little caring what might come;
> Coffee-milling care and sorrow with a nose-adapted thumb;"

and that—greatest item of resemblance—they had a thorough contempt for the dress, usages, and manners of ordinary middle-

class civilization. The word "Philistine," with its now accepted signification, had not been invented by Mr. Matthew Arnold in those days; but the class which it represents existed, of course, and was the object of general loathing and contempt on the part of the Bohemians.

British Bohemia, as it was then, has been most admirably described by Thackeray in *Philip*: "A pleasant land, not fenced with drab stucco like Belgravia or Tyburnia: not guarded by a large standing army of footmen: not echoing with noble chariots, not replete with polite chintz drawing-rooms and neat tea-tables; a land over which hangs an endless fog, occasioned by much tobacco: a land of chambers, billiard-rooms, and oyster-suppers: a land of song: a land where soda-water flows freely in the morning: a land of tin dish-covers from taverns, and foaming porter: a land of lotos-eating (with lots of cayenne pepper), of pulls on the river, of delicious reading of novels, magazines, and saunterings in many studios: a land where all men call each other by their Christian names; where most are poor, where almost all are young, and where, if a few oldsters enter, it is because they have preserved more tenderly and carefully than others their youthful spirits and the delightful capacity to be idle. I have lost my way to Bohemia now," adds the philosopher, writing in the enjoyment of fame and riches; but, he adds with a tender regret, "but it is certain that Prague is the most picturesque city in the world."

From the circumstances of my life—my early marriage, the regular habits formed by, and necessary for, my holding my appointment in the Post Office, and from a certain distaste for a good deal of what formed an integral portion of the career I was never a real Bohemian. But when my lot was cast among them, and when they saw that, though not "to the manner born," I had many tastes and pursuits in common with theirs, I gradually won my way into their regard, and formed many close friendships, some of which happily exist to this day, while others are among the pleasantest memories of my life.

How it was that I first made acquaintance with Bohemia

happened thus. I have already mentioned my early essay in verse-writing for the *Illustrated London News*. The connection thus commenced had been extended by my receiving from time to time proofs of wood-engravings, for which I was desired to furnish appropriate descriptive letterpress. One day I had a note from Dr. Charles Mackay, then editor of the *Illustrated London News*, wishing to see me. I called in the afternoon, expecting to get one of the usual little commissions; but when I found him sitting with his trusty assistant, Mr. John Timbs, the well-known book-compiler, I soon perceived from his manner that he had something more important to communicate. What he said, in fact, was that there had been a dispute between Mr. Ingram, our proprietor, and Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, the printers, over some trade matter; that the quarrel had rapidly assumed large proportions; and that Mr. Ingram had determined not merely to put an end to all business relations between himself and the Whitefriars firm, but to carry the war into the enemy's country by starting at once a comic paper as a rival to *Punch*. He had talked the question out with Dr. Mackay, who, recognising, as he was good enough to say, some brightness and freshness in my work, had kindly recommended me as editor. The pecuniary arrangements would be very liberal. Would I undertake the position?

Of course I accepted at once—in those days I would have undertaken to edit the *Times* or the *Quarterly Review* if I had had the offer—and I was taken off to be introduced to Mr. Ingram, and hear more of the details of the scheme. I found him a little man, with bright eyes, sharp features, and decided manner; he was dressed in ill-fitting clothes, and had a white beaver hat with very long nap, like a country farmer. He was rather uncouth, very brusque, and without much claim to education; but he was an excellent man of business, and to me always liberal, kind, and encouraging. He shook hands with me, heard what I had to say, offered me a salary which was good, and which I thought princely, told me the names of the printers, where to present my accounts, and left the engage-

ment of staff and artists and the entire management in my hands.

Only two things he stipulated for—that the name of the paper should be the *Comic Times*, and that its price should be one penny. These were very important items; I ventured to say—with great internal annoyance at being compelled so soon to differ from my proprietor's views—that to issue a journal with the label of being professedly comic attached to it was a sure way to provoke criticism; while in regard to the price, the experiment of cheap journalism was in its earliest infancy, the *Daily Telegraph* having only been launched a few weeks previously; and I pointed out that it would be highly difficult to obtain the confidence of advertisers for a new and low-priced venture. But Mr. Ingram on these two points was inflexible, and of course I had to give way.

It was a difficult position for me, with a very limited experience of journalism, and no experience at all of editing, and with the thorough knowledge that whatever I might do would be severely criticised by the hundreds of men who would think, and not without reason, that they ought to be in my place. Mr. Ingram, in our short conversation, had expressed his hope, and almost his expectation, that we should soon rival "old Poonch;" and *Punch* was at its very best in those days, with the reflection of Thackeray still on it, with Leech never more bright or more industrious, with Shirley Brooks doing his very utmost—and there has never been so good an all-round writer for a comic journal—to prove how wrong the *Punch* staff had been to keep him so long out of their close borough, and how right they were to have let him in at last; and, worst of all for me, with Mark Lemon for its editor. Not that Lemon was in any way a brilliant or even a suggestive man; but he had had long practice in editing and long experience of his contributors—knew what each man did best, and how most easily to get him to do it. While, under the cloak of corpulent good-nature and jollity, he was exceedingly crafty and *rusé*, as the head man of Messrs. Bradbury & Evans

he would naturally depreciate the work in the *Comic Times;* and, as the private secretary of Mr. Ingram—a position which he then held—he would have every opportunity of doing so in a very important quarter. However, I had embarked on my enterprise, and was determined to carry it through; so I went off at once to get advice, and, if possible, assistance, from Albert Smith.

I found him, as usual, in his foreign blue blouse, pottering about in his sanctum in Percy Street, than which there never was such another room for the collection of extraordinary valueless curiosities, prints, pictures, plaster-casts, and quasi-artistic rubbish of every possible description, thickly overlaid with dust. He was delighted at the chance of my getting work and money, and, while declaring it impossible he could himself write—for the Mont Blanc entertainment was then at the height of its popularity, and absorbed all his attention—he discussed the matter with me; and before I left him we had jotted down the names of several men—some acquaintances, some strangers—out of whom the staff was to be formed.

One of the first of these names was that of Edward Draper, a solicitor in Westminster, who was Albert's legal adviser, and who is happily still living. A man with a vast amount of dry humour, which found its vent now in prose, now in verse, now in rough, but exceedingly ludicrous, sketches on wood—a practical man, sure to be ready with his "copy" in due time, and certain never to write anything actionable. Mr. Draper was a most desirable contributor, and has been through my life a valued friend. He introduced Godfrey Turner, at that time acting as sub-editor of the *John Bull*, whose real literary status has never, as I venture to think, been properly recognised. Of my own personal friends I named Frank Scudamore, W. P. Hale, and John Oxenford.

F. I. Scudamore, afterwards so well known for his management of the Government Telegraphs, for which he obtained a C.B.-ship, was at that time a fellow-clerk of mine in the General Post Office. Some years my senior, he had already

attracted my admiration by my knowledge of the fact that he was already an accepted contributor to *Punch*, many most admirable sets of verses from his pen having appeared therein. I shall have other opportunities of mentioning Mr. Scudamore, but I may here place on record my opinion that of all the men I have known in my long experience, there was scarcely one to beat him. His powers of organization at the height of his career were confessedly wonderful, he was a sound classical scholar, wrote by far the best "light" verse of any man living, was a most effective speaker, and had the keenest sense of humour. His versatility was marvellous; he could persuade a Chancellor of the Exchequer into disbursing millions, and turn out a political parody with a lilting *refrain* which would be quoted throughout the provincial press.

William Palmer Hale, known to everyone as "Billy" Hale, was the eldest son of the Archdeacon of London, educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, and a member of the Bar. My old friend Thomas Knox Holmes, who occasionally gave Hale work before parliamentary committees, always maintained that it was exceedingly well done; but Billy's taste was more for literature than law, and, after he had obtained a fair amount of success by writing burlesques in collaboration with Frank Talfourd (the judge's eldest son), one of which, *The Willow Pattern Plate*, made a great mark in the early Swanborough Strand days, he did not much trouble the Courts. He was a great beer-drinker, and, though the story has been told of others, it was of him Thackeray said, and said to me, "Good Billy Hale, take him for half-and-half, we ne'er shall look upon his like again!" E. L. Blanchard, the well-known critic and dramatic writer, was introduced to me by Albert Smith, and proved a valuable member of our crew.

My acquaintance with John Oxenford, begun some year or two previously, had speedily ripened into intimate friendship; for though he was nearly twenty years my senior, a strong and original thinker on many abstruse subjects, and perhaps of all Englishmen then living the deepest read in German literature

and philosophy, he was full of the most delightful humour, and had the animal spirits of a boy. His hair was snow-white in those days, though he was not more than forty-three; but his dark eyes under his grizzled brows were full of fire and fun. No man had greater horror of an impostor, or of the slightest attempt at the assumption of swagger; but where he took a liking he attached himself firmly, and was the sweetest, the most delightful companion. No one ever wore his learning so lightly, or conveyed it so unconsciously and unpretendingly; no man so thoroughly equipped with vast stores of erudition ever passed through a long life known to the many only as the lightest literary sharp-shooter.

By the general public, or I may say by only that portion of it which takes an interest in theatrical matters, he was known as the dramatic critic of the *Times;* but in those columns, although to readers between the lines there was constant evidence of keen analysis and subtle humour, the great intellectual powers of the man were never to be recognised. Why, he told me more than once, in long delightful chats in tavern parlours, where he would sit with me alone, over a clay "churchwarden" pipe and a pot of ale, and beguile hour after hour with his fancies, delivered in jerky sentences, in a rumbling monotone. When he first took up dramatic criticism for the *Times*—his first employment on the paper had been in the office of its then City editor, Mr. Alsager, a relation of his —he wrote unreservedly his opinion not merely of the play under notice, but of the actors. One of these, being somewhat sharply criticised, appealed in a strong letter to the editor, which Mr. Delane showed to John Oxenford. "I have no doubt you were perfectly right in all you wrote," said the great editor to the embryo critic; "but that is not the question. The real fact is that these matters are of far too small importance to become subjects for discussion. Whether a play is good or bad, whether a man acts well or ill, is of very little consequence to the great body of our readers, and I could not think of letting the paper become the field for argument on the

point. So in future, you understand, my good fellow, write your notices so as much as possible to avoid these sort of letters being addressed to the office. You understand?"

Oxenford understood; and in that interview the *Times* editor voluntarily threw away the chance of being supplied with dramatic criticism as keen in its perspicuity as Hazlitt's, as delightful in its geniality as Lamb's. An acutely conscientious man would, under the circumstances, have declined the task; but Oxenford, though never pressed by poverty—his father, with whom he lived until within the last ten years of his life, was a well-to-do merchant, with a house in John Street, Bedford Row—knew the value of money; his position as theatrical censor of the *Times*, though poorly paid (his salary was only five pounds a week), gave him great weight with managers, and it must be recollected he was dramatist as well as critic. Finally, he was glad to be relieved from the responsibility and the hard work which thoughtful criticism would have entailed; glad to be spared the necessity of wounding the feelings of any of those with whom he lived on intimate terms; glad to be spared time and brain-power for other and more remunerative work. Thenceforward his *Times* notices, written on the principle of being pleasant all round, were amusing essays, in which the learning of the writer was sometimes apparent, and where, to the initiated, a delightful humour was always cropping up; but they were not criticisms such as Oxenford could have written had he been permitted, or such as he frequently orally delivered to two or three appreciative friends.

The outcome of John Oxenford's large store of reading is to be found in cyclopædias and reviews, in his rendering of Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe*, in his translation of Friedrich Jacob's *Hellas*, his work for Bohn's Standard Library, his articles on Molière and other biographical papers in Knight's *Penny Cyclopædia* and the *Westminster Review*. The charm of his fancy illumines scores of songs, original and translated; the delicate flavour of his humour still preserves from decay a dozen comediettas and farces, one of which,

Twice Killed, after being translated into French as an operetta, under the title of *Bonsoir, Signor Pantalon*, was retranslated, and made its appearance in operatic garb on the English stage.

"And be sure you get Sala and the Broughs," were Albert Smith's last words as he followed me to the door.

Mr. George Augustus Sala, with whom I have had business transactions from time to time through the whole of my literary career, is still alive and well. His appearance in the narrative of these desultory reminiscences will be frequent, as we have had so many enterprises in common; but at the time of which I am writing I had only seen him once, at the Fielding Club, whither he had been brought from Rule's oyster-shop, where he was supping, to be presented to the Duke of Sutherland, then Marquis of Stafford, and some of his friends, who were loud in praise of an American story, "Colonel Quagg's Conversion," which had just appeared in *Household Words*. Who could have written it? was the question; which was speedily solved by Albert Smith, who declared he had just left the author, and went away, returning in triumph with a slim young fellow, about six-and-twenty years of age. Like Thackeray, Mr. Sala has "long since lost his way to Bohemia," though in my time at least that picturesque country has never had a denizen so thorough, unless it were the younger of the once famous Brothers Brough, Robert Barnabas Brough.

"Bill" and "Bob" to their friends, in the "land where men call each other by their Christian names," or "clean Brough and clever Brough," the sarcastic but well-fitting distinction drawn between them by a cynical acquaintance; for William the methodical was neat and wholesome, with fresh complexion and trim beard and decent clothes, and Robert the brilliant was sallow and sickly, poor fellow, and wholly careless of his personal appearance—the Brothers Brough, in fine, were the sons of a man engaged in commerce, of whom they always spoke with much affection, and who gave them a plain English education. On this somewhat slender foundation both of

them, in later life, raised a fair superstructure of learning. Both acquired French, and Bob had added a certain amount of German and Spanish to his store. All this to his credit; for while he was a scholar, he was a producer; while he was grinding away at his Ollendorf, he was thinking out his article, or planning his piece, or racking his weary brain for jokes for his forthcoming burlesque.

The gentlemen who just about this time were establishing a new school of critical literature were constantly either savagely ferocious or bitterly sarcastic with professional literary men—persons, that is to say, who lived by the product of their pens, who in most cases had not had the advantage of that University education in which their detractors gloried, and which enabled them to turn the Ode to Thaliarchus into halting English verse, or to imbue with a few classical allusions their fierce political essay or flippant critical review. And, save that he was endowed with more and finer brains than the average run of humanity, Robert Brough was the exact type of the class thus bitterly reviled. Spurning the life of commercial drudgery to which he was originally destined, he commenced on his own account at a very early age, and awoke the echoes of his dull prosaic native town with the cracking of his witty whip.

The *Liverpool Lion* was a new feature in the annals of the Mersey's pride. The merchant-princes, the brokers, the shipping-agents, the great outfitters, and the rest of them had gone through life without much conception of fun. They looked through the pages of *Punch*, perhaps, while digesting their heavy midday meal, and smiled at Leech's glorious cartoons, while understanding little about them. But here was a revelation of wild humour brought into their very midst; here were caricatures which everyone recognised, allusions which all understood. Leech's portrait of Lord Palmerston, whom they had never seen, was not to be compared to the *Lion's* likeness of the Recorder; and no joke in ancient or modern times could compete with the manner in which the Chairman of the Brokers' Association was "taken off" in that song to the tune

of the "King of the Cannibal Islands." Those who wish to inform themselves of the manner of Robert Brough's early life-work should read his novel *Marston Lynch*, of which the author is the hero. I say early life-work; but it was all, in fact, early enough, for he was but five or six and thirty when he died. But in the *Liverpool Lion* is to be seen the germ of most of what distinguished his later writings — the bright wit, the strange quaint fancy, the readiness to seize upon topics of the hour, and present them in the quaintest garb: the exquisite pathos was not there, nor the bitter savagery, though gleams of this last were not wanting.

I have often wondered what gave Robert Brough that deep vindictive hatred of wealth and rank and respectability which permeated his life, and which so surprised me, who had been bred up in a mild Conservatism. It was probably innate; it was certainly engrained. It was largely increased by poverty, by ill-health, by an ill-regulated life, by an ever-present conviction that there lay in him power to produce work of very superior quality to that already published—power which was nullified by his own weakness of will. His was the poetic temperament, sensitive, nervous, irritable; his too the craving after ignoble sources of alleviation in times of mental depression, and the impossibility of resisting temptation, come in what form it might.*

He was a Radical, a Republican even, but something—partly his gentle nature, and doubtless greatly his wonderfully keen perception of the ludicrous—kept him from emulating the literary achievements of the political contributors to the cheap

* On his twenty-ninth birthday he wrote me a letter, commencing:

"I'm twenty-nine! I'm twenty-nine!
I've drank too much of beer and wine;
I've had too much of love and strife;
I've given a kiss to Johnson's wife,[1]
And sent a lying note to mine—
I'm twenty-nine! I'm twenty-nine!

[1] Strictly true, but the name is *not* Johnson.—R. B. B."

Sunday press. His was not the coarse many-syllabled fustian of a "Publicola" or a "Gracchus," produced according to the laws of demand and supply, and paid for by a weekly wage. Robert Brough's was the real fierce hatred welling up from an embittered soul, and finding its vent in verse. Here is the *mot de l'énigme:*

"There is a word in the English tongue,
Where I'd rather it were not;
For shams and lies from it have sprung,
And heartburns fierce and hot:
'Tis a tawdry cloak for a dirty soul:
'Tis a sanctuary base,
Where the fool and the knave themselves may save
From justice and disgrace:
'Tis a curse to the land, deny it who can,
That self-same boast, 'I'm a gentleman.'"

That is the opening of a poem contained in a little thin volume called *Songs of the Governing Classes*, by Robert Brough, published in 1855, the year of which I am writing, by Vizetelly. It had scarcely any sale, and has been unprocurable for many years. From the freedom of its speech, the vigour of its thought, and the polish of its workmanship, it was a very remarkable production; but neither its sentiments nor its statements would bear analysis, and its teachings were dangerous and uncalled for. It goes on:

"You may leave your wife, with her children six,
In a ditch to starve and pine,
And another man's take, in a palace rich,
With jewels and gold to shine;
You may flog your horse or your dog to death;
You may shoot, in a fit of rage,
A helpless groom, and an easy doom
You'll meet from the jury sage:
'There's been provocation—deny it who can?
For we see at a glance he's a gentleman!'"

In his preface he says that, being only known as "a profane jester and a satirist" (as Ruskin said of Salvator Rosa), the public may refuse to take him *au sérieux;* he admits that he

has certainly made jokes for a livelihood, just as he should have made boots, if brought up to the business, and seeing no harm or disgrace in either calling. But he does not see that he is thereby disqualified from giving serious utterance to his feelings on vital questions, as well as his neighbours. "The feeling, of which the following ballads are the faint echo and imperfect expression, is a deeply-rooted belief that to the institution of aristocracy in this country (not merely to its undue preponderance, but to its absolute existence) is mainly attributable all the political injustice, and more especially the grovelling moral debasement, we have to deplore." Limned by such an artist, it can be readily imagined that the "Portraits" of the aristocracy, with which the volume commenced, were not too flattering. The first, "The Marquis de Carabas," a fancy one, is thus sketched:

"Look at his skin—at fourscore years
How fresh it gleams and fair!
He never tasted ill-dressed food,
Or breathed in tainted air.
The noble blood flows through his veins
Still, with a healthful pink.
His brow scarce wrinkled! *Brows keep so*
That have not got to think.
Chapeau bas!
Chapeau bas!
Gloire au Marquis de Carabas!"

And again:

"They've got him in—he's gone to vote
Your rights and mine away:
Perchance our lives, should men be scarce,
To fight his cause for pay.
We are his slaves! he owns our lands,
Our woods, our seas, our skies:
He'd have us shot like vicious dogs,
Should we in murmuring rise!
Chapeau bas!" etc.

His elder brother, William, was very differently constituted. He had been, early in life, apprenticed to a printer, and there

was always about him a business-like manner, and an appreciation of the punctuality and good faith necessary for business relations. Among his Bohemian friends he was remarkable for his neat and dapper appearance. Bob once declared him to be the "sort of man they would put on a jury;" and while not stinting himself in conviviality, he was probably more mindful of the morrow and its requirements than most of his comrades. These qualifications, and, above all, his practical knowledge of printing, power of roughly estimating what so much "copy" would "make" when set up in type, made him very useful to a neophyte like myself, and I speedily established him as my sub-editor.

The writers named constituted, I think, the literary staff, though we had occasional assistance from Albert Smith, Sutherland Edwards (now well known as critic, correspondent, and valuable authority on musical matters), and John V. Bridgeman. There always has been, and there certainly was in those early days, a difficulty in finding suitable artists for a comic publication. As my stock contributors, I was lucky in obtaining the services of Charles H. Bennett, then in the commencement of his career, whose undeniable talent was afterwards recognised by his engagement on *Punch;* and William McConnell, a young man who was just making his mark in illustrating the shilling books then coming into vogue. Later on he obtained great praise for his clever outline illustrations of Mr. Sala's *Twice Round the Clock.* Mr. Newman and Mr. Henning occasionally sent sketches, and subsequently Sala and Robert Brough added to the piquancy of certain of their articles by rough but very humorous wood-drawings.

The first number of the *Comic Times* was dated Saturday, August 11, 1855, and was, like all first numbers, but a poor sample of what the periodical afterwards became. I do not recognise Robert Brough's hand in it, from first to last; but Sala commenced a series of papers called "The Hermit in the Box; being the Experiences of Silas Bulgrummer, Stage-Door-keeper," which ran through several numbers, and are full of

close observation and quaint fancy. There was some mild punning by William Brough, some recondite humour of John Oxenford's, some poetry by Hale, and a clever opening address in delightful rhyme by Frank Scudamore. In the second number Robert Brough commenced "The Barlow Papers," which were the success of the publication. "Billy Barlow," the hero of a comic song then in the height of its popularity, became a contributor in Brough's person, and wrote on every kind of current topic in every kind of verse, but never proceeding for long without some harking back to the *refrain* of the original comic song. Here Brough's sardonic humour had full play. Being wholly unfettered by his subject or its treatment, he could give it those little "tavern-touches" in which his soul delighted; and the result was that "William Barlow," whose adventures were speedily illustrated by their author, became a popular favourite.

This my first bantling had a short but merry career of three months; merry, that is to say, for its editor and contributors, though I doubt if Mr. Ingram saw much fun in his venture. He never grumbled, and his cheques were furnished with praiseworthy regularity; but he could not but have been dissatisfied with the result of his experiment. We all worked very hard; but the circulation, though it gradually rose, never came to anything like paying point. Its business management was bad; it was never properly advertised or quoted; it was hated at the *Illustrated News* office as an interloper; and it was systematically decried and cold-shouldered by Mark Lemon, who, as I have said, was Mr. Ingram's private secretary, and who, having with unctuous adroitness healed the breach between his master and his other employers, Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, determined that our poor little effort should be stamped out at once.

The method which he adopted for accomplishing his purpose was so characteristic and so comic that even at this distance of time I am amused on recalling it. It was late in November, and we had just published a *Comic Times Almanack*

for the coming year, on which I prided myself considerably. Everyone had done his best, and the result was really funny and amusing. So the public seemed to think, for they bought the Almanack with an avidity which they had never shown for the ordinary issue. The worthy cashier, Mr. Plummer, who audited my accounts, and whose manner towards me hitherto would have been severe in his loyalty to Mr. Ingram, had it not been softened by a little feeling of pity and personal regard for myself, at last smiled and congratulated me. It was very good indeed, he said; and with that spirit of partisanship which is always to be found in all persons however remotely connected with the inside or outside of literary production, he added, chuckling, "And they won't like it at Whitefriars." In this remark Mr. Plummer showed his business aptitude: by "Whitefriars" in those days we used to indicate the *Punch* office, which was there situate; and by the "*Punch* people"—Messrs. Bradbury and Evans ("B. and E."), its proprietors, Mark Lemon, its editor, and the staff in general—our Almanack was thought so dangerously good that it was felt the time had arrived when we must be put an end to.

All this I learned long afterwards from one of the band, but at that moment I had no idea save that of utilizing the temporary success we had gained. I would persuade Mr. Ingram into advertising the paper; I would get the business management put on a better system; I would do this and that and the other; and no happier or more many-planned Alnaschar ever walked down the Strand and into Milford House, where I found Mr. Ingram, with the baleful shadow of the corpulent Lemon looming large behind him. The day was Saturday, and though at that time there was no regular half-holiday, it was customary to "knock off work" a little earlier than usual. Mr. Ingram, in the large fluffy hat and the large-patterned silk *cache-nez* so familiar to his friends, was on the point of starting off for Brighton, so he hurriedly said: but he wanted to see me "very partick'lar, very partick'lar indeed;" could I not breakfast with him at the New Ship Inn at Brighton the next morning?

I saw my way to a little outing, combining business with pleasure, and agreed to be with him at 10 A.M. Accordingly that evening my wife and I went down to Brighton to some cheap lodgings in Camelford Street which we were in the habit of frequenting. I told her she would have to breakfast alone, as I was engaged to Mr. Ingram; and on Sunday morning, after a lovely swim at Brill's Baths, I presented myself at the New Ship.

Mr. Ingram's room was on the first-floor, I was told. I went up, knocked, and had the door promptly opened to me by Mark Lemon! He smiled expansively, rubbed his own hands, and seized mine. Over his broad shoulders I could see the room, the table laid for an excellent meal, Ingram with "shining morning face" and in his Sunday clothes, and two ladies in whom I recognised Mrs. Ingram and Mrs. Lemon. Mark tried to bar the entrance with his portly person, but I pushed past him: I shook hands with Ingram, I bowed to the ladies; then Lemon caught me again, he seized my hand, he shook it, he shook it as we progressed all round the room; he never left off shaking it, and gently propelling me, until he had shaken me out on to the landing and shut the door between us.

I saw the hopeless impossibility of seeking an interview with my proprietor under such circumstances, and turned ruefully back to my little lodgings in search of breakfast. It seems scarcely credible that I can have been routed after such a fashion, but this is an exact statement of the facts as they occurred. It must be remembered that Lemon was an old stager with considerable influence over Mr. Ingram, and that I was a very young man with no influence at all, and the chances of the contest being so unequal I thought justified me in thus readily accepting my defeat.*

* I have little doubt now, on thinking over the matter, that Mr. Ingram had fully made up his mind to discontinue the issue of the paper, and that Lemon's quaint strategy merely relieved his patron of the trouble of breaking the news to me.

At all events, defeated I was, and I was soon made to learn it. On the Tuesday morning I received a letter from Mr. Plummer, very business-like but not uncourteous, informing me that Mr. Ingram had "had enough" of the *Comic Times*, and desiring me to bring the existence of that periodical to a close as speedily as possible. It did not require much winding up, poor little leaflet! Another number—there were only sixteen in all—finished it up, and the first of my literary progeny died with scarcely a struggle.

But, though the publication had come to an untimely end, its creators and contributors remained, full of life and hope. During the four months in which we had been thrown together a great feeling of natural liking had sprung up amongst us; the weekly symposia, held in the tavern parlour where the contents of the coming number had been arranged, had proved most delightful *réunions;* and there was a universal feeling of regret that they should be discontinued. Of course there was no actual reason for the cessation; for though the literary preparation of the *Comic Times* involved delicious suppers and hot grogs and fragrant pipes, the suppers, grogs, and pipes could all have been discussed without any excuse of business. It was universally felt, however, that that would not do; we must find some one, some "capitalist"—that is the word always used in connection with such schemes—who would resuscitate the glories of the *Comic Times*, or start some new organ with editor and staff ready to his hand.

The search for this much-desired being was delegated to practical William Brough, but in it he failed dismally. The success of *Punch*— and in those days "B. and E.'s" publication had not merely a very large circulation, but considerable social influence—had called into existence a host of intended rivals, which, after enjoying an ephemeral popularity—for there was good writing in most of them, contributions from James Hannay, and Watts Phillips (a man equally facile with pen or pencil), Sutherland Edwards, and Augustus Mayhew amongst others—had died out. *Puck*, the *Puppet-Show*, *Pasquin*,

Diogenes, and many others had been started on the money provided by "capitalists" of all kinds, wholly unconnected with journalism very often, and after a spurt and a fizzle had expired of inanition. The thing was played out for a time—how often has it been revived since!—and not merely was no capitalist forthcoming, but William Brough could find no publisher, printer, or paper-maker to back our venture, and wait for his money until we succeeded.

But we determined that our intention should not be frustrated, and after long discussion we decided upon forming ourselves into a kind of joint-stock company—it was long before the "limited" days—and bringing out a magazine. The price was to be a shilling, its name *The Train*; writers and artists were to contribute gratis, expecting nothing until the success was established; a subscription of 10*l.* each (120*l.* in all) constituted our capital. I was chosen editor, principally because my ways of life were less erratic than those of most of my friends, and my Post Office occupation would give me a certain amount of stability in the eyes of those business people with whom we should have to deal. The Train-band had all the component elements of the staff of the *Comic Times*, with the addition of Frank Smedley, who joined us at once at my suggestion. All the articles were to be signed by the writers. We agreed unanimously that anonymity was the bane of literature, and that, if we made no money by our venture, at least we would advertise our names. So, on the 1st of January 1856, heralded by very few advertisements, *The Train*, in green cover, with a pretty vignette of the express emerging from a tunnel, with the motto *Vires acquirit eundo*, made its first appearance.

Not exactly in the form originally intended. I had hoped that the leading serial story—we were to have two—would have been written by Sala. Everything was arranged to that effect; our erratic friend had thought over his plot, had settled on his title, "Fripanelli's Daughter," and had given McConnell the subject for an illustration. Time passed without my receiving any of the MS., and I was getting anxious. My own

business habits were so methodical that I had often been surprised at the total failure of most of my comrades to comprehend the meaning of the word punctuality; but hitherto this shortcoming had only affected publishers, the natural enemies of our race; now it would tell, and tell seriously, against the welfare of our little republic just starting into existence.

We were already in December, and I was getting desperate. Not merely had I heard nothing of Sala, but no one had seen him for a week; it was his whim to let no one know where he lived, and we had often laughed over the peculiarity. But now it was no laughing matter. There were certain haunts at which, at certain hours, he could generally be found; but lately he had deserted them. My colleagues were as anxious as myself. We held a conclave; we drew up an advertisement couched in mysterious terms, intelligible only to the initiated, and inserted it in the *Times*. It commenced, I recollect, "Bohemian, where art thou?" and I saw it the other day, to my infinite amusement, reproduced in a volume compiled from the "agony column." It elicited no reply, and we were in despair. The magazine could not appear without some serial story which would evoke public interest and sympathy; and the one I had by me, "Mr. Watkins's Apprentice," by William Brough, had no such claim.

Then Robert Brough threw himself into the breach. He had had no experience of tale-writing, but he would tell the story of his own life—a not uneventful one so far; and we were all delighted at the notion, knowing the grace and charm with which he would invest it. He set to work with a will, and our new magazine opened with two chapters of "Marston Lynch: his Life and Times; his Friends and Enemies; his Victories and Defeats; his Kicks and Halfpence." It was capitally illustrated by McConnell, and I utilized the drawing which that clever artist had made for "Fripanelli's Daughter" as a tailpiece at the end of the second chapter of "Marston Lynch," with which it had nothing whatever to do.

The number was good throughout. Sala was not unrepre-

sented; before his mysterious disappearance he had left with me a paper called "The Parisian Nights' Entertainments," an admirable Salaesque description of a night among the booths and *baraques* of the boulevards on the eve of the Jour de l'An. Robert Brough had a really lovely poem, and Frank Smedley some pretty verse; Hale had some lines, commencing "Too often I've pledged in October's brown draught," reading which aloud, Brough said, "Billy is nothing if not true;" Edward Draper, a sound article on John Wilkes, with the demagogue's head beautifully drawn by Charles Bennett, after Hogarth's portrait; Bridgeman and I each contributed a social essay; and the number wound up with a dramatic dialogue, "Nights at the Round Table," an imitation of Wilson's *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, mention of which leads me to a digression.

While engaged in the preparation of our first number we heard that, simultaneously with our own, a rival periodical was to be issued; and before we had made any announcement, appeared the prospectus of a new shilling magazine, to be called *The Idler*, which was not merely to be amusing and delightful, of course, but which was to lash the ignorant, the incompetent, the presumptuous, and all others whom the promoters of the new organ considered as requiring correction, "with a rod pickled in classic brine." If there had been any doubt as to the leading spirit in the opposition camp, the prospectus, and notably the phrase just quoted, would have set it at rest, and pointed to James Hannay, a young man of great talent, fair education, a certain power of sarcastic invective, a ponderous but fluent speaker, and a vehement political partisan; endowed, moreover, with singular powers of fascination over certain young men. One of these, the bearer of a name distinguished in philanthropy, himself the nephew of an eminent prelate, had recently succeeded to an inheritance, and determined to employ a portion of it in furthering the cause to which he was devoted and the man whom he admired. He gathered round him several very clever young fellows, some fresh from the University, among them Mr. T. E. Kebbel, Mr. H. W. Sotheby, Mr. Blanchard

Jerrold, Mr. J. Cordy Jeaffreson, Mr. Wiltshire Austin, and Mr. E. Forster Blanchard. The editor, in spirit if not in name, was James Hannay; and under these auspices, and in a yellow cover, *The Idler* burst upon the world.

The rivalry between the two newly-born periodicals was, of course, intense. We, in our adversaries' opinion, were Radicals, scoffers, ribalds, ignoramuses, lacking the blessings of a University education — mere pressmen, living by our wits, and without many of them to live on. We held the opposition to be bigoted Tories, self-sufficient prigs, hammering out their thin coating of classics to cover their otherwise universal ignorance; and we ridiculed their mission to judge and castigate society. The animosity ran very high before either venture was launched, and in the "Nights at the Round Table" one of the contributors was made to ask, "Who are the people on *The Idler*?" This was the reply: "Hannay & Co., University and water, with a dash of—no, not gin, but a little cheap claret in it; fellows who, if you once get into their pillory, will pelt you with Greek roots, like so many cabbage-stumps." It was smart, and it called forth a bitter reply. Sala and Brough were, deservedly, regarded as the leading lights of *The Train*. In the second number of *The Idler* the bit of dialogue above given was quoted, with the following epigram:

"Easy to see why S. and B.
Dislike the University;
Easy to guess why B. and S.
Detest cold water little less:

For as their writings prove their creed,
That men who write should never read,
Their faces show they think it bosh
That men who write should ever wash!"

I heard nothing of Sala until I received a letter from him, dated "2, Rue Racine, Paris," ten days after the appearance of our first number. He had been very ill, he said, "utterly incapable of work," and, though better, still suffering from "an incessant horrible pain in my head that nearly drives me mad."

He mentioned having seen Dickens, who was then living over the carriage-factory in the Champs Elysées, and who "is most kind and jolly, and I think will do anything for me." Sala must at this early period have given some thought to the Hogarth papers, which he did not write for years, and must even then have talked of them with Thackeray, under whose editorship they were eventually published in the *Cornhill;* for he says, "He" (Dickens) "knows all about the *book* from Thackeray, but not its title; and learning that from me, gave me two books about Hogarth." I may here say that, though "Fripanelli's Daughter" never saw the light, and "The Countess Nadiejda," another promised serial from the same pen, came to a sudden and abortive conclusion, Mr. Sala did some admirable work in the earlier issues of *The Train.* An article on "Robson," which first appeared there, has been frequently quoted as an extraordinary example of original and powerful dramatic criticism; and there is a grim horror in "The Paper on the Wall," a description of the fantastic appearance of inanimate objects to a sick man's disordered fancy, which is Hoffmannesque in its weirdness.

I have little doubt that the infant Fripanelli would have been born, and the Russian Countess would have flourished in our pages, but for the fact that Mr. Sala's visit to Paris at this time, and his friendly intercourse with Dickens, led the way to the first momentous event in his life—his being despatched two months later on a *Household Words* mission to St. Petersburg, to be recorded in that publication as "A Journey due North." On his outward journey he sent me, for *The Train,* a ballad, "Carmen Stettinense—'Caviar and Rüdesheimer,'" two verses of which I extract:

> "The King of Prussia drinks champagne,
> Old Porson drank whate'er was handy:
> Maginn drank gin, Judge Blackstone port,
> And many famous wits drink brandy.
> Stern William Romer drinketh beer,
> And so does Tennyson the rhymer;
> But I'll renounce all liquors for
> My Caviar and Rüdesheimer.

* * * * * *

If some kind heart that beats for me
This troubled head could e'er be pressed on ;
If in the awful night, this hand
Outstretched a form I loved could rest on ;
If wife, or child, or friend, or dog
I called my own, in any clime—a,
This lyre I'd tune to other strains
Than Caviar and Rüdesheimer."

This came enclosed in an amusing letter, telling me, among other things, of his travelling adventures :

"I am going halves with a Russian in a carriage and post-horses, the former the most remarkable cruelty-van you ever saw, which we are to sell again when we get to the Russian frontier. My friend the Russian speaks every language under the sun, and is very likely a spy ; but it is very little he can get out of me. Cookery, the opera, lords and ladies are the staple subjects of conversation, and to all questions I find the reply, that 'J'ai des affaires à St. Pétersbourg,' that I have letters of introduction to the American Minister, and that Baron Steiglitz is my banker, quite satisfactory."

The reception of the magazine by the London and provincial press was very flattering, and in the—at that time—powerful *Examiner*, which usually ignored any light and flippant publications, the great John Forster was kind enough to speak very encouragingly of our efforts in a notice which commenced, "*The Train* starts full of very pleasant talkers." These remarks, I remember, had great weight with our publishers, Messrs. Groombridge, of Paternoster Row, worthy gentlemen, whose attention had hitherto been devoted to the production of a very different style of literature—works on science, botany, and zoology—and who were always, I thought, somewhat nervous as to what might be among the contents of *The Train*. We had a very fair sale, and the look-out for the future was promising.

In the second number Robert Brough commenced a series of translations of "The Ballads and Romantic Poems of Victor

Hugo," presenting the graceful fancies of the original in an English garb which was equally graceful and attractive. These translations were continued for several months. In number three I published a poem by "Lewis Carroll," under which pseudonym, then first adopted, the author has since won vast popularity with *Alice in Wonderland* and similar works. Many pieces originally contributed to *The Train* are reproduced in Mr. "Carroll's" later books. By this it will be seen that the magazine did not long remain a close borough, but that we were glad to avail ourselves of suitable extraneous assistance, which was, I am bound to say, very freely offered. Rising young writers liked the association, and were glad to contribute to our pages, though aware that no payment was forthcoming, while men of achieved reputation, like my old friends Palgrave Simpson and John Oxenford, occasionally sent me always welcome articles. In the first volume I find a little poem, "Tempora Mutantur," by Frederick Locker, the first, I believe, which he ever published, and which is incorporated in his *London Lyrics*. Mr. Hain Friswell, Dr. Maurice Davies, Mr. Thomas Archer, and Mr. Albany Fonblanque were also acceptable recruits.

With the commencement of our third volume, a year after our first start, we had a valuable accession to our staff in the person of John Hollingshead, whose acquaintance I had just made, and with whom I became very intimate. He had at that time essayed no literary flight, and I think his first productions are printed in *The Train*. They were marked by great originality, quaint humour, and strong common sense: they made their mark at once. Mr. John Hollingshead then adopted literature as a profession, and continued it with excellent results, until he went into the more lucrative calling of theatrical manager. His most intimate friend at that time, as now, was William Moy Thomas, who even then had made a name as a sound English scholar, clever critic, and pungent writer. At Hollingshead's suggestion, Moy Thomas sent us several articles: one, a scathing criticism of Griswold's *Life of*

Poe, created some sensation at the time, and would well bear reproduction.

To Hollingshead's introduction, too, we owed the contributions of a new artist, which about this time appeared in our pages. I will not name the gentleman, for I believe he lives and prospers, and has doubtless greatly improved in his art. What it was in those early days may be guessed from an observation of Thackeray's. The magazine was sent by my orders to the Garrick Club, and I used to be very proud to see it lying amongst its elder brethren on the table of the little reading-room upstairs. I used furtively to cut its leaves, but I had no notion that anyone read it, until one day Thackeray surprised me by saying, "You have a new artist on *The Train*, I see, my dear Yates! I have been looking at his work, and I have solved a problem. I find there *is* a man alive who draws worse than myself!" It was in the third volume, too, that I first began a series called "Men of Mark," which in style and treatment was really the forerunner of the "Celebrities at Home," and the first examples of which were Dr. Russell and Mr. Wilkie Collins.

It is needless to say much more about the fortunes or misfortunes of *The Train*. The spirit of *camaraderie*, the desire to emancipate ourselves from the thraldom of the publisher and to be our own masters, died out in many of us when we found that we had miscalculated our strength or the public taste, and that calls instead of dividends were the result of our speculation. It was not to be expected that men who lived by their work would, after a time, give that work gratis while they could get money for it. Some held bravely on to the end; but there were important defaulters, and for the last nine or ten months I had no contributions from the original artists, and had to depend on any drawings I could beg, so that the poor magazine declined in quality, and its circulation, which never had been great, became very small. Finally, after a career of two years and a half, *The Train* stopped running altogether. As its con-

ductor I had gained valuable editorial experience. But I had paid for it. For, during its thirty months' existence, besides our original joint-stock funds, which were speedily exhausted, it had absorbed over nine hundred pounds, some of which had already come out of my pocket, but for the major portion of which I was still responsible at the time of its winding up.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE GARRICK CLUB: AND MY "DIFFICULTY" THEREWITH.

1858.

In the present year there are, according to the omniscient *Whitaker's Almanack*, seventy-two clubs in London, exclusive of those in the City, and of such establishments as Hurlingham, Prince's, etc. In 1848, when I was first introduced to club-land, there were twenty-three clubs: the Army and Navy, which then had its quarters in St. James's Square, and in the summer-time used to have a tent in its garden; Arthur's, Athenæum, Boodle's—with a very different set of members; Brook's, Cocoa Tree, Conservative, East India United Service, Garrick—in a different house; Guards', at the top of St. James's Street; Junior United Service, National, Oriental, Oxford and Cambridge, Portland, Reform, Travellers', Union, United Service, United University, White's, and the Windham. In addition to these there were a few which have been long since defunct: the Alfred, a great place for superior Government clerks, at the northern end of Albemarle Street, in premises which, after it dissolved and was partially incorporated with the Oriental, became the Westminster, established by the leading London tradesmen, where the dinners were excellent and the play was high; the Coventry, known as the "Velvet Cushion," a very "smart" place on Piccadilly hill, premises now occupied by the St. James's Club; and the Free Trade, in St. James's Square.

As soon as I was fairly launched in London, it was my mother's great wish that I should belong to the Garrick Club,

of which my father had been an original member; and though I was much under the age prescribed by the regulations, my appearance was that of a full-grown man, and there was little reason to fear that the fact of my having attained my majority would be questioned. Accordingly, I was proposed by the veteran comedian Mr. Harley, and seconded by Andrew Arcedeckne; and, being well supported by members who had known my father, I was elected into the Garrick in December, 1848, fully six months before I had attained my eighteenth year.

The Club at that time was not, in numbers, size, or importance, anything like what it is now; though, on the other hand, it was more sociable and snug than is compatible with its present status. Its quarters were in King Street, Covent Garden, a private house which had been converted for that purpose, the most striking portion of which, however, was the smoking-room on the ground-floor, built out over the "leads"—a good-sized apartment, comfortably furnished, well ventilated, and adorned by large pictures specially painted for it by Stanfield, David Roberts, and Louis Haghe.

For nearly ten years this house was to me the pleasantest, cheeriest, happiest place of resort. I look back upon the innumerable hours which I passed there, always well treated, and I am afraid a good deal spoiled—for I was very young and very high-spirited, and I dare say very impertinent—with the greatest delight: it was rightly said of me, years after, in a newspaper, that the Garrick Club was to me what Paradise was to the repentant Peri.

Let me give some account of those who helped me to that happiness, and of the manner in which I lost it, as impartially as though I had been a spectator of the scene, instead of a chief performer in it.

The titular chief of the Club in those days was its President, the Duke of Devonshire, who seldom entered its doors; the Vice-President was Lord Tenterden, a courteous and asthmatic old gentleman. But the man who had done most for the Garrick, and who had the greatest claim upon its members,

was John Rowland Durrant, a wealthy and leading member of the Stock Exchange, who had purchased and presented to the Club the famous collection of theatrical portraits and pictures, originally made by the elder Mathews, and then hanging on the Garrick walls. Mr. Durrant had always been a friend to the theatrical profession, several members of which had made good investments under his guidance; he was held in high honour at the Garrick, had his special chair in the smoking-room, and was treated with deference and respect, which he accepted with cheery good-humour.

The chair at the opposite corner of the fireplace was generally occupied by J. D., most mellow of elderly topers, with all the characteristics of "Bardolph of Brasenose"—a veteran who drank and swore in the good old-fashioned way, and who came to a sad end, poor old fellow, dying alone in his Temple chambers, on a Christmas Eve, of loss of blood from an accident, while the men in the rooms below heard him staggering about and groaning, but took no notice, as they fancied their neighbour was only in his usual condition.

There, too, would be Mr. Frank Fladgate, to whose constant supervising attention as a committeeman the Club owed its well-being, who is happily still alive, and retains all those qualities which have made him popular through a long lifetime.

A very big man, with a bald head and a fine face, was Edmond Cottrill the sculptor, principally employed in modelling figures and groups for racing trophies, etc., by Messrs. Garrard. Equally big and bald, and more blond and bland, was Sir Henry Webb, an English baronet who spoke with a French accent, and was mad about all things musical.

Charles Kemble, still of handsome presence, though turned seventy, and of courtliest manners, was a constant attendant.*

* I do not think I have ever met a man more hopelessly deaf. Some of us were sitting one afternoon at the Garrick, when a tremendous thunderstorm broke over the house. It raged with extraordinary fury, one clap exploding with terrific noise immediately above us like a volley of artillery. We looked round at each other almost in horror; when Charles Kemble,

Wyndham Smith, nicknamed the "Assassin," from some University escapade, son of the great Sydney, and a man of curious saturnine humour; Isidore Brasseur, most delightful of French professors, whom I saw a year or two ago at Trouville, a hale and active octogenarian; Egg, the A.R.A.; Glasse, an eccentric artist; delightful Clarkson Stanfield and genial David Roberts; Dr. Millingen, a veteran campaigner with Wellington, of whom he had recorded his experiences; G. M. Dowdeswell, Q.C., Walter Coulson, Q.C., Serjeant Talfourd, and Serjeant Murphy.* Other seniors were Sir William de Bathe, Sir Charles Shakerley, John Lloyd Clayton, Planché, and Charles Dance, whose bright intelligence and quick wit would never have been suspected from his heavy appearance. The two last named were great friends, and had been frequent *collaborateurs;* so that Albert Smith's saying that Victor Hugo's line, "Une danse ou il n'y a pas de planche," had nothing to do with the Lyceum, which was supported both by Dance and Planché, had truth as well as smartness to recommend it. Another never-failing attendant was the Hon. and Rev. Fitzroy Stanhope, brother of the then Lord Harrington, a pleasant, handsome old gentleman, who will probably be best known to posterity as the inventor of a phaeton which bore his name, and as the hero of one of the

who was calmly reading, lifted his eyes from his book, and said in his trumpet-tone, "I think we are going to have some thunder; I feel it in my knees."

* Francis Stack Murphy, serjeant-at-law, and one of the leaders of the Northern Circuit; clever at his profession, but far cleverer out of it; a man of the readiest wit; the king of legal Bohemia. He took a great liking to me, and many of my evenings were spent in his company, either in his chambers in Serjeants' Inn—where he would be concocting a bashawed lobster, while importunate visitors were thundering at the sported oak—or in places of social resort. Most of Murphy's "good things" were flavoured with *gros sel*, and will not bear reproduction in print; but it may be remarked that the admirable rejoinder to the man who expressed his surprise at having seen no fish "when dining at a certain ducal mansion"—"What, had it all been eaten upstairs?"—which has been attributed to so many, was really made by Murphy, and to Samuel Warren.

"Kilmallock" stories.* Among the actors were the popular veteran, T. P. Cooke ("Tippy," as he was always called), the dancer of hornpipes and impersonator of Jack-tars; quaint old John Pritt Harley; Drinkwater Meadows, ill-named, for he was the driest little chip imaginable, but an excellent actor in a small way—"carving on a cherry-stone," as Jerrold said of him; James Wallack, who was an excellent smoking-room story-teller; Ben Webster, Walter Lacey, and Leigh Murray.

The Household Brigade was represented by Captains H. P. de Bathe, C. Seymour, Meyrick, and Cuthbert George Ellison, a very amusing fellow.

* William O'Connell, cousin of the Liberator, by whom in a special joke he was nicknamed Lord Kilmallock—by which name or its abbreviation ("Kil") he was ever after known—was a great character amongst a certain set in London in those days. He was an Irish gentleman of the old fighting, drinking, creditor-defying school, who, in his impoverished days, lived here in London, no one knew exactly how. He was a very handsome old man, with a red face and white hair; walked lame from the effects of a bullet in his hip received in a duel; and had the deepest, most rolling, most delightful brogue. He is said to have shared with the O'Gorman Mahon the honour of having been the original of the Mulligan. The story alluded to above is this. One day Kilmallock, who always attended public promenades, was in the Park pointing out the celebrities to a neophyte: among others Fitzroy Stanhope passed. "D'ye see that man, sir?" asked Kil—"him in the one-horse thrapp? That's a dane." But the youth, who had previously seen the old clerical aristocrat, said, 'O no, it isn't; that's Mr. Stanhope—he's an Englishman." "'Tis not a Dane of Swaden that I mane, sir," thundered Kil; "'tis a dane of the Churr-ch!" Kilmallock dined with me once, when a dear friend of mine, who was very much deformed, was present. I saw Kil regarding him with much interest. As we went upstairs after dinner, he said to me, "A dreadful soight, that poor fellow. I've been thinking, sir, what a job his tailor must have! *It must be like making a dress-coat for a corkscrew!*" The old gentleman has been dead for many years. The last time I saw him I was coming away from a ball at a house in Gloucester Place in the early morning: the supper had taken place hours before; but as I passed the dining-room I heard voices, and looking in, saw some guests, "fit, though few," sitting round the table, presided over by the untiring Kil, whose last words, as they fell upon my retreating ear, were, "Close up now, and we'll be all right. Waiters, be nimble wid the wine there!"

Dickens came rarely to the Club; but Thackeray was dearly fond of it, and was always there. I remember a speech of his at an annual dinner, then always held on Shakespeare's birthday, in which he said, "We, the happy initiated, never speak of it as the Garrick; to us it is the G., the little G., the dearest place in the world!"

Samuel Lover, Robert Bell, Henry Spicer, and, later on, Charles Reade and Peter Cunningham, were regular frequenters, as were Charles Taylor, Arabin, Arcedeckne, H. C. Ibbetson, J. L. O'Beirne, Sir Charles Ibbetson, Sir George Armytage, and a certain Mr. Joseph Arden, a prize bore. The steward of the Club, happily named Hamblett, was a great character.

I had been a member of this pleasant company for nearly ten years, and I suppose I should have remained so until the present moment, had I not had the good—or bad—fortune, I have never yet been able to decide which it was, to be present on Saturday, 22nd May 1858, at a Greenwich dinner, given by Mr. Vizetelly to the staff of the *Illustrated Times*, and to be driven to London, afterwards, by Mr. Maxwell the publisher. My subsequent connection with Mr. Maxwell was satisfactory—I hope to both of us, certainly to me. I was indebted to him for constant employment, and can never forget that he had sufficient faith in me to allow me, wholly untried as a novelist, to make my first experiment in that character in the pages of his magazine. But whether my first very brief engagement with him was for my benefit or not, I am quite unable to say.

In the course of our homeward drive Mr. Maxwell told me that he had just started a little periodical called *Town Talk*, on which he offered me employment at a salary of three pounds per week. This offer I gladly accepted. My new bantling was a very different kind of production from the sheet which has in later years appropriated its title. It was a quiet harmless little paper, with a political cartoon drawn by Watts Phillips, who also contributed its politics and heavy literature. It contained a portion of a serial story, a set of verses—in which, in the number before me, I recognise Frank Scudamore's hand—and

a certain amount of scissors-work; all the rest of the original matter was mine.

About the third week of my engagement I went over to the printer's, which was in Aldersgate Street, close by the Post Office, at the close of my official work, to "make up" the paper. All my contribution was in type, and I thought I should only have to remain half an hour to "see all straight," when I was horrified at hearing from the head-printer that in consequence of illness Mr. Watts Phillips had not sent in his usual amount, and that another column of original matter was absolutely requisite. There was no help for it; I took off my coat —literally, I remember, for it was a warm evening—mounted a high stool at a high desk, and commenced to cudgel my brains.

It happened that in the previous week's number I had written a pen-and-ink sketch of Dickens, which had given satisfaction; I thought I could not do better than follow on with a similar portrait of his great rival. And this is what I wrote:

LITERARY TALK.

Finding that our pen-and-ink portrait of Mr. Charles Dickens has been much talked of and extensively quoted, we purpose giving each week a sketch of some literary celebrity. This week our subject is—

MR. W. M. THACKERAY.

HIS APPEARANCE.

Mr. Thackeray is forty-six years old, though, from the silvery whiteness of his hair, he appears somewhat older. He is very tall, standing upwards of six feet two inches, and as he walks erect his height makes him conspicuous in every assembly. His face is bloodless, and not particularly expressive, but remarkable for the fracture of the bridge of the nose, the result of an accident in youth. He wears a small gray whisker, but otherwise is clean shaven. No one meeting him could fail to recognise in him a gentleman; his bearing is cold and uninviting, his style of conversation either openly cynical or affectedly good-natured and benevolent; his *bonhomie* is forced, his wit biting, his pride easily

touched; but his appearance is invariably that of the cool, suave, well-bred gentleman, who, whatever may be rankling within, suffers no surface display of his emotion.

HIS CAREER.

For many years Mr. Thackeray, though a prolific writer, and holding constant literary employment, was unknown by name to the great bulk of the public. To *Fraser's Magazine* he was a regular contributor, and very shortly after the commencement of *Punch* he joined Mr. Mark Lemon's staff. In the *Punch* pages appeared many of his wisest, most thoughtful, and wittiest essays; "Mr. Brown's Letters to his Nephew" on love, marriage, friendship, choice of a club, etc., contain an amount of worldly wisdom, which, independently of the amusement to be obtained from them, render them really valuable reading to young men beginning life. The *Book of Snobs*, equally perfect in its way, also originally appeared in *Punch*. Here, too, were published his buffooneries, his *Ballads of Policeman X*, his *Jeames's Diary*, and some other scraps, the mere form of which consisted in outrages on orthography, and of which he is now deservedly ashamed. It was with the publication of the third or fourth number of *Vanity Fair* that Mr. Thackeray began to dawn upon the reading public as a great genius. This great work—which, with perhaps the exception of *The Newcomes*, is the most perfect literary dissection of the human heart, done with the cleverest and most unsparing hand—had been offered to, and rejected by, several of the first publishers in London. But the public saw and recognised its value; the great guns of literature, the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh*, boomed forth their praises, the light *tirailleurs* in the monthly and weekly press reëchoed the *feux de joie*, and the novelist's success was made. *Pendennis* followed, and was equally valued by the literary world, but scarcely so popular with the public. Then came *Esmond*, which fell almost still-born from the press; and then *The Newcomes*, perhaps the best of all. *The Virginians*, now publishing, though admirably written, lacks interest of plot, and is proportionately unsuccessful.

HIS SUCCESS,

commencing with *Vanity Fair*, culminated with his "Lectures on the English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century," which were attended by all the court and fashion of London. The prices were

extravagant, the lecturer's adulation of birth and position was extravagant, the success was extravagant. No one succeeds better than Mr. Thackeray in cutting his coat according to his cloth. Here he flattered the aristocracy; but when he crossed the Atlantic, George Washington became the idol of his worship, the "Four Georges" the objects of his bitterest attacks. These last-named lectures have been dead failures in England, though as literary compositions they are most excellent. Our own opinion is that his success is on the wane. His writings never were understood or appreciated even by the middle classes; the aristocracy have been alienated by his American onslaught on their body; and the educated and refined are not sufficiently numerous to constitute an audience. Moreover, there is a want of heart in all he writes, which is not to be balanced by the most brilliant sarcasm and the most perfect knowledge of the workings of the human heart.

As soon as this little sketch was written, and while the ink was scarcely dry, I handed the slips to the printer, and went off. I never saw it in proof, I never thought of it again. That it was offensive or objectionable, or likely to bring me into trouble, I *could* not have thought, for that very evening I mentioned at the Garrick Club to a well-known *littérateur*, whom I at that time believed to be a friend of mine, the fact of my new engagement, with a general idea of what I was doing for it. I have not the least doubt it was from this person that Thackeray had his information as to the writer.

Two days after, I received the following letter:

"36 Onslow Square, S.W., June 14.

Sir,—I have received two numbers of a little paper called *Town Talk*, containing notices respecting myself, of which, as I learn from the best authority, you are the writer.

In the first article of 'Literary Talk' you think fit to publish an incorrect account of my private dealings with my publishers.

In this week's number appears a so-called 'Sketch,' containing a description of my manners, person, and conversation, and an account of my literary works, which of course you are at liberty to praise or condemn as a literary critic.

But you state, with regard to my conversation, that it is either 'frankly cynical or affectedly benevolent and good-natured;' and of my works (lectures) that in some I showed 'an extravagant adulation of rank and position,' which in other lectures ('as I know how to cut my coat according to my cloth') became the object of my bitterest attack.

As I understand your phrases, you impute insincerity to me when I speak good-naturedly in private, assign dishonourable motives to me for sentiments which I have delivered in public, and charge me with advancing statements which I have never delivered at all.

Had your remarks been written by a person unknown to me, I should have noticed them no more than other calumnies; but as we have shaken hands more than once, and met hitherto on friendly terms (you may ask one of your employers, Mr. —— of ——, whether I did not speak of you very lately in the most friendly manner), I am obliged to take notice of articles which I consider to be not offensive and unfriendly merely, but slanderous and untrue.

We meet at a club, where, before you were born, I believe, I and other gentlemen have been in the habit of talking without any idea that our conversation would supply paragraphs for professional vendors of 'Literary Talk;' and I don't remember that out of that club I have ever exchanged six words with you. Allow me to inform you that the talk which you have heard there is not intended for newspaper remark; and to beg—as I have a right to do—that you will refrain from printing comments upon my private conversations; that you will forego discussions, however blundering, upon my private affairs; and that you will henceforth please to consider any question of my personal truth and sincerity as quite out of the province of your criticism.

W. M. THACKERAY.

E. YATES, Esq."

Now it must, I think, be admitted by the most impartial reader that this letter is severe to the point of cruelty; that whatever the silliness and impertinence of the article, it was scarcely calculated to have provoked so curiously bitter an outburst of personal feeling against its writer; that, in comparison with the offence committed by me, the censure administered by Mr.

Thackeray is almost ludicrously exaggerated. The question naturally suggests itself, how such a disparity between the peccant composition and the witheringly wrathful and rancorous reply is to be accounted for? To that matter I may presently revert. Here I will only say that Mr. Thackeray's letter, as it well might have done, came upon me with a sense of amazement. But although I had at the moment no idea of the motive which impelled Thackeray to insist so strongly upon the fact that the Club was our only common meeting-ground, and that it was thence my presumed knowledge of him was derived, I felt that the sentence in which he emphasised the fact afforded me a legitimate opportunity for a tolerably effective retort.

I therefore sat down at once, and wrote Mr. Thackeray a letter in which I not only disclaimed the motives by which he had accused me of being actuated, but took the liberty of reminding him of some past errors of his own—rather strong errors of a similar kind as to taste—not the result of the hasty occupation of an hour, but deliberately extending over a long space of time, persisted in from month to month, and marked by the most wanton, reckless, and aggravated personality. I reminded him how, in his *Yellowplush Correspondence*, he had described Dr. Lardner and Sir E. L. Bulwer: "One was pail, and wor spektickles, a wig, and a white neckcloth; the other was slim, with a hook nose, a pail fase, a small waist, a pare of falling shoulders, a tight coat, and a catarack of black satting tumbling out of his busm, and falling into a gilt velvet weskit." How he had held them up to ridicule by calling them "Docthor Athanasius Lardner" and "Mistaw Edwad Lytton Bulwig," by reproducing the brogue of the one and the drawl of the other, and by exhibiting them as contemptible in every way.

In regard to the Garrick Club, I called Mr. Thackeray's attention to the fact that he had not merely, in his *Book of Snobs*, and under the pseudonym of Captain Shindy, given an exact sketch of a former member, Mr. Stephen Price, repro-

ducing Mr. Price's frequent and well-known phrases; he had not merely, in the same book, drawn on a wood-block a close resemblance of Wyndham Smith, a fellow-member, which was printed among the "Sporting Snobs," Mr. W. Smith being a sporting man; he had not merely, in *Pendennis*, made a sketch of a former member, Captain Granby Calcraft, under the name of Captain Granby Tiptoff, but in the same book, under the name of Foker, he had most offensively, though amusingly, reproduced every characteristic, in language, manner, and gesture, of our fellow-member, Mr. Andrew Arcedeckne, and had gone so far as to give an exact woodcut portrait of him, to Mr. Arcedeckne's intense annoyance.*

This letter would at least have been a Roland for an Oliver; and had I sent it, I might possibly have heard no more of Mr. Thackeray or his outraged sensitiveness. The argument was not, perhaps, very polished or telling; but the *tu quoque* was so complete, and so incisively put, as to perfectly prove to a man of Thackeray's quickness the folly of further proceedings. But, unhappily, I resolved upon seeking some advice before despatching my reply.

I first thought of consulting Albert Smith, but I remembered there were the remains of a little ill-feeling on his part towards Thackeray which might deprive his counsel of its moral value. A year before, Thackeray, having heard that A. S. had not behaved generously to an old friend, spoke somewhat slightingly of him. The story was wholly untrue, as Thackeray was brought to acknowledge. And another thing, small though it

* Arcedeckne, however, had his revenge. On the night after Thackeray's delivery of his first lecture on the "Humourists" at Willis's Rooms, where he had a very aristocratic audience, the great cynic was preening himself under a mass of congratulations at the Cider Cellars Club, when Arcedeckne entered; and walked up to him. "How are you, Thack?" he said, buttoning his coat across in his usual fashion. "I was at your show to-day at Willis's. What a lot of swells you had there—yes! But I thought it was dull—devilish dull! I'll tell you what it is, Thack—*you want a piano!*"

seemed, had tended to widen the breach. Albert Smith, asked for an autograph, had written in an album:

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crowned him long ago;
But who they got to put it on
I don't exactly know."

The book was sent the next day, with a similar request, to Thackeray, and he wrote, immediately under the foregoing:

"Albert, of course, wrote in a hurry,
To criticise I scarce presume;
And yet I think that Lindley Murray,
Instead of 'who,' had written 'whom.'"

This was, of course, told to Albert Smith, who, though he laughed, did not half like it.

So I gave up all thought of consulting Albert, whose blunt common sense would, I imagine, have recognised the advisability of hitting a downright "slogging" blow by sending the letter, and determined to seek advice from Dickens. I sent round a note to Tavistock House asking if I could see him, and had a reply to say that he was dining with Dilke, but would not be leaving home until after six: "I need not say you may in all things count upon yours ever, C. D."

I told Dickens my story, showing him Thackeray's letter and my reply. Of the letter he did not approve: it was too flippant and too violent; and, after a little discussion, the following acknowledgment was sent:

"June 15th, 1858.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, referring to two articles of which I am the writer.

You will excuse my pointing out to you that it is absurd to suppose me bound to accept your angry 'understanding' of my 'phrases.' I do not accept it in the least: I altogether reject it.

I cannot characterize your letter in any other terms than those in which you characterized the article which has given you so much offence. If your letter to me were not both 'slanderous and untrue,' I should readily have discussed its subject with you,

and avowed my earnest and frank desire to set right anything I may have left wrong. Your letter being what it is, I have nothing to add to my present reply.

EDMUND YATES."

By the end of the week Mr. Thackeray had decided upon the course to be pursued, and wrote thus :

"Mr. Thackeray has this day forwarded a copy of the ensuing letter to the Committee of the Garrick Club, with the enclosures mentioned in the letter.

'36 Onslow Square, June 19, 1858.

Gentlemen,—The accompanying letters have passed between me and Mr. Edmund Yates, another member of the Garrick Club.

Rather than have any further personal controversy with him, I have thought it best to submit our correspondence to you, with a copy of the newspaper which has been the cause of our difference.

I think I may fairly appeal to the Committee of the Garrick Club to decide whether the complaints I have against Mr. Yates are not well founded, and whether the practice of publishing such articles as that which I enclose will not be fatal to the comfort of the Club, and is not intolerable in a society of gentlemen.

Your obedient servant,

W. M. THACKERAY.'"

In the first surprise of this intelligence I addressed the Committee thus :

"June 19, 1858.

Gentlemen,—I have just heard from Mr. Thackeray that he has thought proper to lay before you the details of a personal difference between us.

This course has come before me utterly unexpectedly, and I therefore beg you to suspend your judgment until I have consulted my friends, and been able to prepare my own version of the matter for submission to you.

Your obedient servant,

EDMUND YATES.

To the Committee of the Garrick Club."

Under date of the same day I received this communication from the Secretary of the Club :

"Garrick Club, 19th June, 1858.

Sir,—I have the honour, by the direction of the Committee, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 19th June.

I am further directed to inform you that a Special Meeting of the Committee is called for Saturday next, at half-past three o'clock, to take the subject of Mr. Thackeray's complaint into consideration.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
ALEXANDER DOLAND,
Secretary.

E. H. YATES, Esq."

It must be remembered that in my little article there was no mention of the Garrick Club, not the faintest reference to anything heard, said, or done there. The Committee of the Club, therefore, had nothing whatever to do with the matter—a position which I took up in the following letter:

"June 23rd, '58.

Gentlemen,—I have received an obliging intimation from the Secretary of the Club that the Committee will assemble on Saturday next, for the purpose of taking into consideration a complaint made against me by Mr. Thackeray.

With the greatest respect, I beg to submit that Mr. Thackeray's grievance is not one to be submitted to the Committee. His grievance is a certain article written by me in a certain newspaper; that article makes no reference to the Club, refers to no conversation that took place there, violates no confidence reposed there, either in myself or anyone else.

This article may be in exceedingly bad taste; but I submit with great deference, and subject to the Committee's better judgment, that the Committee is not a Committee of taste. This article may be, most unintentionally, incorrect in details; but, unless I had so far forgotten the honour and character of a gentleman as wilfully to distort truth, I still venture to submit that its inaccuracy is not a question for the Committee's collective decision.

Mr. Thackeray's course in laying this matter before the Committee I hold to be unprecedented. Unless I am mistaken, there are members of the Committee's own body who have been

the subject of very strong remarks in print by fellow members of the Club, but who have no more thought of laying their personal injuries and resentments before a Committee of the Club, than before a Committee of the House of Commons.

Once again, I take this position with the greatest respect. If the Committee think otherwise, then I readily submit myself to the correction of the Committee; and recognise as fully as the Committee can, that Mr. Thackeray lays the correspondence before them in the legitimate and customary way.*

In this case, but not otherwise, I strongly entreat the attention of the Committee to the terms of Mr. Thackeray's letter of the 14th inst.; and when the Committee have heard that letter read, I ask whether Mr. Thackeray rendered it possible for me to express my regret for having given him offence?

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

EDMUND YATES.

To the Committee of the Garrick Club."

The Committee held a meeting, and sent me this letter:

"Garrick Club, 26th June, 1858.

Sir,—I have the honour, by the direction of the Committee, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, and to make the following communication to you:

At a Special Meeting of the Committee, on Saturday, the 26th June, 1858, it was unanimously resolved:

'1st. That it is competent to the Committee to enter into Mr. Thackeray's complaints against Mr. Yates.

* I may mention here that there was a little vapouring gossip, about the Garrick Club, as to my intending, through this phrase or some other, to abide by the Committee's verdict or the verdict of the General Meeting—I don't know which, and I believe no small-talker knew which. The fact stands thus: I appealed to the General Meeting from the Committee, as an aggrieved person might appeal from a Vice-Chancellor to the Lord Chancellor. Not righted, I appealed again, as the same person might then appeal to the House of Lords. I did not wish to be discourteous and refuse to appear before either of the two Club Courts. That the General Meeting never considered me pledged to abide by their decision is made manifest in their own proceedings, by their "trusting that a most disagreeable duty might be spared them" through my not abiding by it.

'2nd. That it is the opinion of the Committee that Mr. Thackeray's complaints against Mr. Yates are well founded, and that the practice of publishing such articles, being reflections by one member of the Club against any other, will be fatal to the comfort of the Club, and is intolerable in a society of gentlemen.

'3rd. That in the opinion of the Committee, Mr. Yates is bound to make an ample apology to Mr. Thackeray, or to retire from the Club; and if Mr. Yates declines to apologize or retire, the Committee will consider it their duty to call a General Meeting of the Club to consider this subject.

'4th. That copies of these resolutions be sent to Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Yates.

'Lastly, That this Special Meeting of the Committee do stand adjourned to Saturday, the 3rd of July.'

I have the honour to be, sir,
Your most obedient, very humble servant,
ALEXANDER DOLAND.

To W. M. THACKERAY, Esq., and to E. H. YATES, Esq."

This was an anxious time; there were frequent councils, at which John Forster, W. H. Wills, Albert and Arthur Smith, as well as Dickens and myself were present. Just then out came the (I think) seventh number of *The Virginians*, containing a wholly irrelevant and ridiculously lugged-in-by-the-shoulders allusion to me, as "Young Grub Street," in its pages.* This was generally considered to be hitting below the belt while pretending to fight on the square, and to be unworthy of a man in Mr. Thackeray's position. To the above letter of the Committee I replied:

"43 Doughty Street, W.C., July 1st, 1858.

Gentlemen,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter of the 26th ultimo, making me acquainted with the resolutions you passed on that day, in reference to 'Mr. Thackeray's complaints against Mr. Yates.'

* It was a pleasant peculiarity of Mr. Thackeray's to make semi-veiled, but unmistakable, allusions in his books to persons at the time obnoxious to him. *Ex. gr.* a reference to "my dear young literary friends Tom Garbage and Bob Bowstreet."

With all respect and deference, I beg to state to you that I will not retire from the Club, and that I cannot apologize to Mr. Thackeray. I would very gladly do the latter, if the terms of Mr. Thackeray's letter to me were less offensive; but I conceive that if I made an 'ample apology' to the writer of that communication, I should myself deserve that portion of it which you adopt in your second resolution, and should be 'intolerable in a society of gentlemen.' I therefore desire to appeal from your opinion to a General Meeting on the two questions:

Firstly, whether the cause between Mr. Thackeray and myself is a case to be submitted to you at all.

Secondly, whether, if it be, Mr. Thackeray has any right to claim an apology from one whom he has so very arrogantly and coarsely addressed.

With great regret that I cannot defer to your decision, and with much esteem and consideration,

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
EDMUND YATES.

To the Committee, Garrick Club."

Upon the receipt of this letter, the Committee summoned a General Meeting of the Club for the 10th July, to take into consideration the whole question, and at once set to work to whip up support. We, on our side, were not idle: we should lose Albert Smith's vote and personal influence at the meeting, as he had made arrangements to sail for China, in search of material for a new entertainment, on the 8th; but we had many promises of adherence. The question lying between the Committee, as supporting Thackeray, and myself, it was argued that neither of the contending parties ought to vote, and there was some discussion among us as to whether I could be present at the meeting. The following letter from Dickens, on the point, well exemplifies his practical and business-like character:

"Gad's Hill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent,
Twenty-sixth July, 1858.

My dear Edmund,—I have been thinking about the General Meeting. My considerations and reconsiderations thereupon induce me to recommend you *not* to attend it in person.

Firstly, I think it pretty certain that Thackeray will stay away. If he should do so, it would be regarded as an act of delicacy in him; and your doing the reverse would be regarded as an act of indelicacy in you.

Secondly, though he should come—still, your staying away will show well by the side of his presence.

Thirdly, it is very difficult indeed for anyone, though practised in public meetings and appearances, to keep quiet at such a discussion, the said anyone being a principal therein.

Fourthly, you could do nothing if you were there but deny you ever intended to abide by the Committee's decision. That I will say for you if necessary.

In case you should be staggered by this advice of mine, ask one or two men of experience and good judgment, whom you can trust, what *they* say. I am pretty sure that on careful consideration they will agree with me.

Ever faithfully,
CHARLES DICKENS.

EDMUND YATES, Esq."

It was, however, thought advisable that I should send the following letter, to be read at the General Meeting:

"Gentlemen,—You will this day have laid before you a correspondence between Mr. Thackeray and myself, certain resolutions of your Committee affecting me, and such few representations as I have thought it becoming to offer to your Committee in writing.

I beg to assure you that although I consider Mr. Thackeray to have placed it out of my power to apologize to him, I am perfectly willing to apologize to you for any unpleasant feeling that I may have awakened in the Club by the publication of the unfortunate article in question. I have no hesitation whatever in expressing to you (but not to Mr. Thackeray) my sincere regret that I ever wrote it, and put you to the pain and inconvenience of having to take it into your consideration.

Your obedient servant,
EDMUND YATES."

On Friday, July 9th, I was in the rooms of the Garrick Club for the last time; and I may mention that, except on two occasions, afterwards specified, so long as that house remained in the occupation of the Club, I never looked upon it again.

The General Meeting was held the next day. Neither Thackeray nor I attended; but the Committee were there in full force, and, with the exception of Dickens, voted to a man in their own favour. As an amendment to a resolution declaring that the Club had nothing to do with the subject at issue between Mr. Thackeray and myself, the following resolutions were proposed by Mr. James Cornelius O'Dowd, now holding an appointment under the War Office, but at that time assistant-editor of the *Globe*, which was then a Liberal journal:

"1st. That it was competent to the Committee to enter into Mr. Thackeray's complaints against Mr. Yates.

"2nd. That it is the opinion of this Meeting that Mr. Thackeray's complaints against Mr. Yates are well founded.

"3rd. That the practice of publishing such articles, being reflections by one member of the Club against any other, will be fatal to the comfort of the Club, and is intolerable in a society of gentlemen.

"4th. That this Meeting is at once prepared to support the Committee in any step they may consider necessary for the suppression of this objectionable practice.

"5th. That this Meeting trusts that a most disagreeable duty may be spared it by Mr. Yates making such ample apology to Mr. Thackeray as may result in the withdrawal of all the unpleasant expressions used in reference to this matter.

"6th. That with this expression of opinion, the Meeting refers the whole question back to the Committee."

The speakers who supported me at the meeting were my friend Mr. Charles Dickens, Mr. Wilkie Collins, Mr. Robert Bell, Mr. Samuel Lover, Mr. Palgrave Simpson. These may have been influenced by personal friendship; but there were other men of mark, with whom I had no kind of acquaintance, but who were entirely actuated by a sense of justice in defending my cause. Among them I may name the late Mr. Justice Willes and Sir James Fergusson, now Governor of

Bombay, then an officer in the Guards, who, on reading of the case, was so struck with the bad feeling of the cabal against me that he hurried home from Palestine, where he was travelling, to speak and vote at the Garrick in my favour. But my enemies were too numerous and too powerful, and on a division Mr. O'Dowd's resolutions were carried by a majority of twenty-four, the numbers being seventy and forty-six.

To the secretary's letter enclosing these resolutions I returned no answer. In pursuance of them the Committee erased my name from the list of members on the 20th July—of which I received notice from the secretary. An interval of grace had been previously left for me to apologize to Mr. Thackeray; but I did not apologize, and that was the result.

I next took counsel's opinion on the right of the Committee so to erase my name and terminate my membership. The opinion being that they had no such right, and that I "had not been legally ejected from the Garrick Club," I resolved to try that question.

I submit to the reader that it will be seen from my letters that throughout I had shown the greatest forbearance, courtesy, and consideration towards the Committee. They did not return the compliment very handsomely, for they would not even make the little preliminary legal admissions usually made in suits, the objects of which is to try a right. They would not by their attorney make the formal admission of a "trespass" having been committed upon me in my ejection from the Club. And that this is not a common course even among ordinary suitors, not to say among gentlemen claiming to settle questions of honour, will appear from one of the opinions of my counsel, Mr. Honeyman, of Paper Buildings, Temple,* who writes, in an otherwise dry legal document (previous to these proceedings I had never seen him in my life), "I cannot help saying that I consider the course pursued by the Committee or their advisers in refusing to give any facilities for trying the legal question, or

* Afterwards raised to the Bench. Mr. Serjeant Ballantine also gave me some friendly and valuable advice.

to furnish the names of the responsible parties, as exceedingly discreditable; but if such course should be proceeded in, I recommend Mr. Yates, before bringing his action, to present himself at the Club, and to insist on remaining there until removed."

Therefore, I went to the Club on two occasions. On the first, the secretary denied my right to enter, at some point of the entrance steps which was not legally in the building. So I went again, with my solicitor, and was satisfactorily trespassed upon, or so I was assured, and brought my action.

By the advice of my counsel, I brought the action against the secretary. He had been selected and put forward by the Committee to commit the trespass; they had instructed the secretary for the purpose; he is the paid agent, or servant, who always executes the Committee's directions; who, in the administration of the affairs of the Club, does what the Committee orders, and is directly responsible to them; of whom the Committee invariably act as the master. I had given him written notice that I wished to avoid any approach to disturbance or inconvenience, and that I would present myself at the Club at a certain time. At that time he received me there, accompanied by my solicitor. On my saying I must enter, he replied good-humouredly, "I suppose this is what you want, Mr. Yates—will this do?" and laid his hand on my shoulder to prevent my going further. This was considered quite enough, and he became the nominal defendant.

To this action, so brought to try the right of the Committee to eject me from the Club because I had given Mr. Thackeray offence, and to try that matter of right simply, at the very last moment, the Committee pleaded virtually that the whole property of the Club was absolutely vested in trustees, the only persons responsible on its behalf to anybody for anything; that the secretary was a name, and the Committee were a name; that nobody but the trustees had legally incurred, or could legally incur, any responsibility arising out of what had been done to me.

The result of this quibble was that I had no remedy but as against the trustees, and no remedy even as against them but through that channel which is known to everyone as easy, expeditious, and inexpensive, under the name of the Court of Chancery. Referring the probable cost of this birthright to my solicitor, he wrote me that, in the event of my failing, *it would probably not be more than* 200*l. or* 300*l.* Of course, as a young man with the world before me, I was not prepared to undertake such a responsibility, and the proposed action was eventually abandoned.

The solicitors who advised me in the matter were Messrs. Farrar and Ouvry of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the counsel retained to conduct my case was Mr. Edwin James, Q.C., who at that time stood high in popular favour, having recently obtained the acquittal of Dr. Bernard, charged with conspiring against the Emperor of the French. A fat florid man, with a large hard face, was Edwin James, with chambers in the Temple and rooms in Pall Mall: his practice was extensive, his fees enormous. I had many consultations with him, but found it difficult to keep him to the subject of my case: he liked talking, but always diverted the conversation into other channels. One day I took Dickens—who had never seen Edwin James—to one of these consultations. James laid himself out to be specially agreeable; Dickens was quietly observant. About four months after appeared the early numbers of *A Tale of Two Cities*, in which a prominent part was played by Mr. Stryver.* After reading the description, I said to Dickens, "Stryver is a good likeness." He smiled. "Not bad, I think," he said, "especially after only one sitting."

* "Mr. Stryver, a man of little more than thirty, but looking twenty years older, stout, loud, red, bluff, and free from any drawback of delicacy; had a very pushing way of shouldering himself, morally and physically, into companies and conversations that argued well for his shouldering his way up in life. . . . Shouldering itself towards the visage of the Lord Chief Justice in the Court of King's Bench, the florid countenance of Mr. Stryver might be daily seen, bursting out of the bed of wigs like a great sunflower pushing its way at the sun from a rank garden full of flaring companions. . . . A glib man, and an unscrupulous, and a ready and a bold."

There is no doubt it was pretty generally said at the time, as it has been said since, and is said even now, that this whole affair was a struggle for supremacy, or an outburst of jealousy, between Thackeray and Dickens, and that my part was merely that of the scapegoat or shuttlecock.

There was no intimacy, nor anything really like friendship, between the two men, though an outward show of cordiality had been maintained in public. Dickens had taken the chair at the dinner to Thackeray in '55, and had alluded to the "treasures of wit and wisdom within the yellow covers:" Thackeray, in his lectures on "Weekday Preachers," declared that he thought Dickens was specially commissioned by Divine Benevolence to delight mankind. But Dickens read little, and thought less, of Thackeray's later work; and once, when I was speaking of the ruthless strictures of the *Saturday Review* on *Little Dorrit*, Thackeray, agreeing with me in the main, added, with that strange, half-humorous, half-serious look, "though, between ourselves, my dear Yates, *Little D.* is Deed stupid."

Of course, Thackeray knew perfectly well that Dickens was advising me in all my movements in this matter, that he had publicly espoused my cause at the General Meeting, and had resigned his seat on the Committee on account of my treatment by that body; but the subject was never discussed in any way between the two men until late in the autumn of this same year.

In November, Dickens, returning to town after an absence of some months, heard from me that the writ in my action was about to be served. He expressed to me, I dare say for the fiftieth time, his conviction that the Garrick Club Committee had no right to interfere in the matter, but at the same time reiterated his recommendation that it should be accommodated without legal proceedings and without public scandal. Upon this, two letters passed between him and Thackeray. I asked Dickens for these letters, and his reply was: "As the receiver of my letter did not respect the confidence in which it addressed him, there can be none left for you to violate. I send you

what I wrote to Thackeray and what he wrote to me, and you are at perfect liberty to print the two. I am, of course, your authority for doing so."

"Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.
Wednesday, 24th November, 1858.

My dear Thackeray,—Without a word of prelude, I wish this note to revert to a subject on which I said six words to you at the Athenæum when I last saw you.

Coming home from my country work, I find Mr. Edwin James's opinion taken on this painful question of the Garrick and Mr. Edmund Yates. I find it strong on the illegality of the Garrick proceeding. Not to complicate this note or give it a formal appearance, I forbear from copying the opinion ; but I have asked to see it, and I have it, and I want to make no secret from you of a word of it.

I find Mr. Edwin James retained on the one side ; I hear and read of the Attorney-General being retained on the other. Let me, in this state of things, ask you a plain question.

Can any conference be held between me, as representing Mr. Yates, and an appointed friend of yours, as representing you, with the hope and purpose of some quiet accommodation of this deplorable matter, which will satisfy the feelings of all concerned?

It is right that, in putting this to you, I should tell you that Mr. Yates, when you first wrote to him, brought your letter to me. He had recently done me a manly service I can never forget, in some private distress of mine (generally within your knowledge), and he naturally thought of me as his friend in an emergency. I told him that his article was not to be defended ; but I confirmed him in his opinion that it was not reasonably possible for him to set right what was amiss, on the receipt of a letter couched in the very strong terms you had employed. When you appealed to the Garrick Committee and they called their General Meeting, I said at that meeting that you and I had been on good terms for many years, and that I was very sorry to find myself opposed to you ; but that I was clear that the Committee had nothing on earth to do with it, and that in the strength of my conviction I should go against them.

If this mediation that I have suggested can take place, I shall be heartily glad to do my best in it—and God knows in no hostile

spirit towards anyone, least of all to you. If it cannot take place, the thing is at least no worse than it was; and you will burn this letter and I will burn your answer.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES DICKENS.

W. M. THACKERAY, Esq."

"36 Onslow Square, 26th November, 1858.

Dear Dickens,—I grieve to gather from your letter that you were Mr. Yates's adviser in the dispute between me and him. His letter was the cause of my appeal to the Garrick Club for protection from insults against which I had no other remedy.

I placed my grievance before the Committee of the Club as the only place where I have been accustomed to meet Mr. Yates. They gave their opinion of his conduct and of the reparation which lay in his power. Not satisfied with their sentence, Mr. Yates called for a General Meeting; and, the meeting which he had called having declared against him, he declines the jurisdiction which he had asked for, and says he will have recourse to lawyers.

You say that Mr. Edwin James is strongly of opinion that the conduct of the Club is illegal. On this point I can give no sort of judgment: nor can I conceive that the Club will be frightened, by the opinion of any lawyer, out of their own sense of the justice and honour which ought to obtain among gentlemen.

Ever since I submitted my case to the Club, I have had, and can have, no part in the dispute. It is for them to judge if any reconcilement is possible with your friend. I subjoin the copy of a letter which I wrote to the Committee, and refer you to them for the issue.

Yours, etc.,
W. M. THACKERAY.*

C. DICKENS, Esq."

(*Enclosed in the foregoing.*)

"Onslow Square, Nov. 26, 1858.

Gentlemen,—I have this day received a communication from Mr. Charles Dickens, relative to the dispute which has been so long pending, in which he says:

* The original draft of this letter, in Thackeray's handwriting, is, strange to say, now in my possession. It was given me, years after it was written, by a friend, who found it with a miscellaneous lot of Thackerayana which he purchased at a sale.

'Can any conference be held between me, as representing Mr. Yates, and any appointed friend of yours, as representing you, in the hope and purpose of some quiet accommodation of this deplorable matter, which will satisfy the feelings of all parties?'

I have written to Mr. Dickens to say that, since the commencement of this business, I have placed myself entirely in the hands of the Committee of the Garrick, and am still as ever prepared to abide by any decision at which they may arrive on the subject. I conceive I cannot, if I would, make the dispute once more personal, or remove it out of the court to which I submitted it for arbitration.

If you can devise any peaceful means for ending it, no one will be better pleased than

Your obliged faithful servant,

W. M. THACKERAY.*

The Committee of the Garrick Club."

So far as I am concerned, I never heard that the Committee took any steps whatever in regard to this communication. Within a few weeks the legal action was abandoned on my part, and the affair was at an end.

Such is the history, with nothing extenuated nor aught set down in malice, of a most important event in my life; whether the result was for good or ill I am wholly unable, as I said before, to decide. Its importance prevents its being in any way slurred over, and I have told it in full with every detail.

I have told it, not to vindicate myself—for no one can see more clearly than I do the silliness and bad taste of the original article—nor, most assuredly, to cast any slur upon Mr. Thackeray's memory; for I firmly believe that, had he

* John Forster, in his *Life of Charles Dickens*, alludes to this matter as a "small estrangement, hardly now worth mention, even in a note." This is all very well; but the estrangement was complete and continuous, and Dickens and Thackeray never exchanged but the most casual conversation afterwards. And most certainly at the time no one was more energetically offended with Thackeray than John Forster himself. I perfectly well remember his rage when Dickens showed him the letter of the 26th November, and how he burst out with "He be damned, with his 'yours, etc.'!"

lived, he would have been led to acknowledge that the severity of my punishment was out of proportion to the offence committed.

I have told it that that portion of the public which is interested in literary squabbles may be rightly informed as to the extent of my offence; and that those who bear my name may rest assured that the act, which has been so frequently referred to and so bitterly punished, was one for which—though they may deplore the thoughtlessness which prompted it, and the obstinacy with which it was persisted in—they can have no real reason to blush.

CHAPTER X.

DESK, STAGE, AND PLATFORM.

1858—1872.

In September, 1858, when the Garrick episode, though not finally closed, so far as the lawyers were concerned, had virtually been brought to an end by the vote of the general meeting expelling me from the club, I went for my autumnal holiday to Seaton, a seaside village in Devon, on the borders of Dorsetshire, which had been discovered, as a place combining plenty of the picturesque with thorough rest and quiet, by my friend William Fenn, the artist, who usually acted as our pioneer in such matters. Discovered, I may say; for though Seaton is now a thriving watering-place, with its railway station, its esplanade, and its red cliffs dotted with villas and terraces, it was then a primitive village, inaccessible either by railway or public coach, and only to be reached by driving from Bridport: almost unknown and wholly unvisited; but with its lovely views, fresh air, and perfect peace, the exact spot for a tired Londoner in search of repose both of body and mind.

We were a family party, arriving by coach, which I had chartered at Bridport—my mother, ourselves, and our children—and we settled down at the little Baths House, which almost stood in the sea, and gave ourselves up to enjoyment. There were lovely walks and drives, visits to the romantic fishing and lace-making—not without a touch of smuggling—village of

Beer, potterings about with Fenn on his sketching expeditions, and a stay for a few days with my friend Mr. Henry Webster, then inhabiting Shute House, near Colyton, a few miles off, where, amongst our fellow-guests, was the present Master of the Rolls, who was making his way at the Bar, but who had not then arrived at the dignity of Q.C.

It was at Seaton that I first explained to my mother what had happened to me in connection with the Garrick Club. Living very much out of the world as she did, she had heard nothing of it, and knowing how much she would be distressed, I had not the heart to tell her, though I fully felt the necessity of doing so; but I was in the habit of receiving at Seaton the weekly numbers of a new publication, the *Welcome Guest*, of which more anon, where were then appearing Mr. Sala's articles, "Twice Round the Clock," and I took advantage of an allusion to me which was made in one of these essays to explain the whole matter to her.*

* Here is the allusion: "The great Mr. Polyphemus, the novelist, is bidden to the Duke of Sennacherib's, and as he rolls to Sennacherib House in his brougham, meditates satiric onslaughts on 'Tom Garbage' and 'Young Grubstreet'—those Tom Thumb foes of his—in the next number of the *Pennsylvanians*. Mr. Goodman Twoshoes is reading one of his own books to the members of the Chawbacon Athenæum, and making, I am delighted to hear, a mint of money by the simple process. Goldpen, the poet, has taken his wife and children to Miss P. Horton's entertainment; Bays, the great dramatist, is sitting in the stalls of the Pontoppidan Theatre, listening with rapt ears to the jokes in his own farce; and Selwyn Cope, the essayist, is snoring snugly between the sheets, having to rise very early to-morrow morning, in order to see a man hanged. And where are the working men of literature, the conscripts of the pen, doomed to carry Brown Bess for sixpence a day all their lives? Where are Garbage and Grubstreet? In the worst inn's worst room, with racing prints half hung, the walls of plaster and the floors of sand, at once a deal table, but stained with beer, sits Garbage playing four-handed cribbage with an impenitent hostler, a sporting man who has sold the fight, and a potboy who is a returned convict? Sits he there, I ask, or is he peacefully pursuing his vocation in country lodgings? And Grubstreet, is he in some murky den, with a vulture's quill dipped in vitriol, inditing libels upon the great, good, and wise of the day? Wonder upon wonders, Grubstreet sits

The *Welcome Guest*, in which these essays originally appeared, was started by Mr. Henry Vizetelly in the spring of 1858, and was one of the most excellent of cheap magazines. In it appeared, in serial form, an excellent translation, I believe by Mr. J. V. Bridgman, of Gustave Freytag's novel, *Debit and Credit;* a capital romance, "Under a Cloud," by Messrs. Frederick and James Greenwood; many of Mr. Sala's best stories and essays, besides those already mentioned, including a very laughable one—it was in the time of Mr. Rarey—called "How I tamed Mrs. Cruiser." Mr. Vizetelly being the editor, it is unnecessary to say that Mr. Sutherland Edwards and Mr. Augustus Mayhew were among the contributors; and there were clever novelettes, stories, and poems by various hands. The sub-editing was excellently done: certain pages were avowedly supplied by the scissors, but these weapons were plied with such taste and judgment as to render their product not the least interesting portion of the miscellany.

In the second year of its existence the *Welcome Guest* was purchased by Mr. Maxwell, and by him issued at an advanced price in a different shape, but without the illustrations; it was under the editorship of Robert Brough, but with much the same staff of authors.

My dramatic work, which, in collaboration with Herbert Harrington, had been so successful, afforded me employment from time to time. For the first season of Miss Louisa Swanborough's management of the Strand Theatre we wrote a broad bustling farce, turning on the adventures of a cheap photographer, and called *Your Likeness, One Shilling;* while the last piece produced at the Princess's Theatre under Mr.

in a handsome study, listening to his wife laughing over her crochet-work at Mr. Polyphemus's last attack on him, and dandling a little child upon his knee! Oh, the strange world in which we live, and the post that people will knock their heads against!"

And again, in the same periodical, in writing of clubs, "G. A. S." says: "I fear the awful committee, with a dread complacency, can unclub a man for a few idle words inadvertently spoken, and blast his social position for an act of harmless indiscretion."

Charles Kean's management was from our pen. It was played after the revival of *Henry V.*, and had its effect in somewhat lightening the spirits of the audience before their departure. The management, and apparently the public, were thoroughly satisfied with it; it was pronounced by the press to be "extremely neat," with dialogue "written with smartness beyond the average," and it was certainly excellently acted. In the present days of a genuine heroine-worship, with recollections full upon us of Beatrice, Viola, Olivia, and Camma, it seems odd to read in connection with this slight comedietta that "Miss Ellen Terry is worthy of a special word of praise for the spirit and point with which she played the part of a youthful groom or tiger."

For the opening of the new Adelphi Theatre, erected on the site of the little building with which my name had been so long connected, I, at Mr. Webster's request, wrote an introductory sketch. I have forgotten all about it now, save that it was a dialogue in verse introducing all the members of the company, with special reference to them, their position, and peculiarities; and that on the first night the whole effect of this was marred through the crass stupidity of Mr. Paul Bedford, who did not know one line which had been set down for him, and who, to my horror, adopted an improvisation of his own, beginning, "Stop the cart, stop the cart, dear kids, stop the cart; let old Paul have something to say to you."

Also in collaboration with Harrington I wrote an entertainment for Mr. George Case, a well-known musical man and player of the concertina, who retired from the orchestra on his marriage with a Miss Grace Egerton, a pretty and uncommonly sprightly and clever little actress, who ought to have done better things.

In buying a pair of horses from a dealer, the experienced purchaser is generally aware that he will become the owner of a good animal and a bad one, and the writer of entertainments for a married couple is very often in an analogous position. In the present instance, we soon found that Mr. Case could

only be intrusted as feeder to his wife; but that the lady's pluck, energy, and talent enabled her to undertake anything we chose to give her. There were two or three "bits" of character in which she reminded me strongly of Mrs. Keeley; and a song which I wrote for her, full of patriotic clap-trap, which she sang in the character of a Volunteer at the close of the entertainment, invariably brought down the house.

For this was the beginning of the Volunteer movement, which was causing a stir throughout the length and breadth of the land, and in which I had the pleasure of taking an active, though subordinate, part. In such a movement it would have been unpardonable if the Government officials had not been early and largely represented, and the Civil Service Rifle Regiment, with the Prince of Wales for its honorary colonel, Viscount Bury for its colonel, and with two Post Office companies in its rank, was speedily enrolled, having Somerset House for its head-quarters. One of the Post Office companies had for its captain a gentleman than whom no one has more largely contributed to the honour in which the service is held, and than whom there is, I suppose, no more efficient Volunteer officer—I allude to Lieutenant-Colonel Du Plat Taylor, now commanding the 49th (Post Office) Middlesex. My colleague, Harrington, commanded the other company; and, though he was reported to have seen service in Spain under Sir de Lacy Evans, his military gifts were not equal to his dramatic genius. I was his ensign; and I think the same might be said of me. Nor do I think that the other literary gentlemen who held commissions in the regiment—Mr. Tom Taylor in the Whitehall company, and Mr. W. S. Gilbert in one of the Somerset House companies—were particularly distinguished for their drill.

The first meeting, for the purpose of establishing the Post Office companies, took place on the 8th of December '59, and our first muster for drill was a week later, on the 15th, when we met at the Barber Surgeons' Hall in Monkwell Street, at the back of the Post Office, which had been kindly placed at our disposal. When the weather grew brighter, and, our

numbers increasing, we required more space, we were permitted to drill in the ground of the Charterhouse, which is a short distance from the Post Office; and there, under the tuition of a smart sergeant and a long corporal of the Coldstreams, one of whom bade us to "Shalloo humps," while the other entreated us to "Shoolah hice," we went through our evolutions before a limited audience.

The boys were never present—they had gone home; but the Poor Brethren of the Charterhouse, Thomas Newcome's colleagues, came creeping round in their black gowns, gazing at the intruders in astonishment. "Codd Colonel" was amongst them; for, after looking on for a few minutes, he stole away, and when he returned I saw that he had affixed his Waterloo medal on his faded coat, and his bearing was once again upright and martial. The worthy Master of Charterhouse, Archdeacon Hale, took an interest in us, would come and watch us drill, and I think on one occasion devoted a sermon to the furtherance of the cause.

Which progressed with but little let or hindrance. In its earliest days, a thoughtless sketch in *Punch* supplied the youthful population with the sarcastic cry of "Who shot the dog?" with which the Volunteers were for a long time chaffed on their public appearances; and much cynical wit was expended upon us. One regiment, possessing a brownish-gray uniform with red facings, was known as the "pauper lunatics with their throats cut." We, the Post Office companies, were once turned into horrible ridicule by a small and preternaturally sharp boy, who, standing in the middle of the crowd as we marched by, amid expressions of admiration, hit the fatal blot by exclaiming, in a shrill key, "Ain't they all of a size neither!" which, it is needless to say, we were not. Stories were invented of Volunteer colonels on the line of march, who, after frantically exclaiming, "Right wheel! left wheel!" and having got their men horribly clubbed, ended by roaring out, "Damn it, turn up Fetter Lane!" and the members of the new force were general victims of chaff and fun.

Still we prospered. On the 7th of March 1860, the Queen held a Levée in St. James's Palace, for the purpose of receiving the officers of the newly-formed rifle corps, which I attended. Her Majesty's courtesy, doubtless well-intentioned, was much minimised by a snub received from the always agreeable Lord Chamberlain's department, in a notice to the effect that attendance at this Levée "was not to count as a presentation to the Queen." It was reckoned that about two thousand five hundred Volunteer officers passed before her Majesty, representing an effective force of seventy thousand men.

On the 22nd of June following, about twenty-one thousand Volunteers—fifteen thousand belonging to the metropolis and six thousand to the provinces—were reviewed in Hyde Park by the Queen, who was accompanied by the Prince Consort and the King of the Belgians, then her guest. It was, I remember, a tremendously hot and fatiguing day; for we were on the ground early, though the Queen and party did not arrive till four o'clock, and drove along to the extreme left of the line of the Volunteers on the Bayswater Road, and thence along the whole front to the extreme right at Albert Gate. Her Majesty then took up her station in the royal stand, erected about the middle of Park Lane, and the entire mass of Volunteers marched past in companies. When all had passed, and returned to their original position, the line advanced in battalion columns, and, at a given signal, burst into vociferous cheers for her Majesty. It was a grand day and a fine sight, but pleasanter, I should say, to the spectators than to the actual performers.

The whole of this year, 1860, was desperately wet and cold and cheerless. We had drills and field-days and brigade-days, inspections in the Park, work on Wimbledon Common, combinations with other regiments in various suburbs, and I have a recollection of being generally wet through on most occasions; but very few of us suffered in health, and undoubtedly the "movement" aroused a great spirit of *camaraderie* among us. Nothing that I have known has ever done so much to weld together and bring into unison the various departments of the

Civil Service. Amongst other things, we had amateur performances, in aid of our band fund, I think, or some other patriotic institution, which were triumphantly successful.

An original drama, called *A Lesson for Life*, had been specially written for us by Tom Taylor; the female characters were filled by professional ladies, and we had the advantage of an exceptionally charming heroine in Miss Kate Terry. I never saw so excellent a performance by amateurs. Mr. Robert Morrisson of Somerset House was, in appearance and in talent, scarcely to be distinguished from Mr. William Farren; Messrs. Du Plat Taylor, Angell, Hood, and Dewar afforded invaluable aid. A high official in the Treasury represented a college tutor to the life. The part of Oppenhardt, a Jew, was originally intended by Tom Taylor for me; but I declined it, my time being so much engaged in attendance on my mother, who was then seriously ill, and I contented myself by representing one Basewitz, a foreign swindler, who was only seen in the first act. I also wrote a rhymed address for the occasion, which was pointedly delivered by Mrs. Stirling.

I held my position as ensign in the Civil Service regiment for about two years, when I found that the time required for the proper discharge of its duties encroached seriously upon my other work. From it I obtained good-fellowship, healthy exercise, and, I trust, a certain amount of popularity, besides gaining the material for a series of articles called the "Grimgribber Rifle Corps," which had quite a little success in *All the Year Round*.

This year, 1860, to me in many respects important, always remains in my mind surrounded by mournful memories, for in it I lost one of those dearest to me in the world and several old friends, Albert Smith among them. On Albert's return from China in the late autumn of '58 I had noticed a decided difference in his health and spirits. He who had never known a finger-ache was constantly complaining—the heat in China had played the deuce with him, he said; he had travelled too quickly; he wished he had contented himself with his Swiss

holiday, etc., and left the Eastern trip for another year. The fact was that he had conceived the idea of going to China, and finding therein the subject for a new entertainment, by noticing the speed at which my "mail journey" (*vide* pp. 79, 80) had been undertaken; but he forgot that everything had been specially prepared for me at Government expense, and that my duties were ended on reaching home. I had had no reason for keeping my mind active in search of "subjects" during my journey, and no entertainment to write at my journey's end.

Albert had always been a little intolerant with people of whom he did not know much, but he was now brusque and almost brutal. He decidedly refused to make the acquaintance of anyone whom a common friend might wish to present. "Who is he?" "What has he done?" "I don't want to know him—I hate all strangers"—these were his frequent cries, and one had constantly to bear in mind what an excellent fellow he really was, and what a valuable friend he had been, to keep the proper seal on one's lips under his irritation. At last a small tiff was inevitable: Albert had chosen to quarrel with a common friend, whom I thought he had used very badly. I said nothing, however, on the subject to him, and nothing would have occurred had he not heard that this person was going to dine with me on my birthday, while he was not invited. He then wrote to me an unpleasant letter, saying that, as I preferred other people's society to his, it were best I should see no more of him. This letter, severing our old relations, I refrained from answering, and I saw nothing of him for many months.

During the interval he had, at the close of his entertainment, married Miss Mary Keeley, and gone on his usual autumn trip to Chamounix. When London was filling again in the autumn, Mrs. Albert Smith, an old friend of my wife's, came to see her. There was no reason, Albert said, that they should be estranged; but I did not meet him until at a ball in the winter, where, entering the refreshment-room after a dance, I found him standing at the buffet. He looked round and caught

my eye, hesitated an instant, then advanced with outstretched hand: "Let's have a glass of wine together, old fellow," he said; and our little quarrel was over, never to be renewed.

I had heard of Albert's illness, and was not surprised at finding him looking aged and worn. He had fainted on the 23rd of the previous month (December) in the middle of his entertainment, had to finish it abruptly, and was for more than a fortnight at home under the doctor's hands. In spite of their strict warning, as he then told me, he had recommenced his work a few evenings before, on the 10th, and, as he assured me, found himself none the worse. From that time I saw him frequently, and realized that he was a changed man; the hard work, the late hours, and free living, spread over a long series of years, were beginning to show their effect—the seeds of disease were in him and shooting apace. I think he knew this, and tried to conquer his feeling.

He had made additions to the house which he had recently purchased at North End, Walham Green, and gave frequent dinners and entertainments there; he tried to resume his old boisterous spirits, but to me they never seemed to be genuine. He was very anxious that his wife should be much with mine, and that we should be frequently at his house; but my mother was lying ill at the time, and as I had to go to her at Kentish Town every day, I could not visit him often. The last time I saw him was on Thursday, the 3rd of May. On the previous night we had gone down with him after his entertainment, and supped and slept at his house. As I smoked my cigar he talked long and, for him, earnestly, expressing his perfect happiness in the tranquillity and repose of his home, his constant anxiety to get back to it, and his wonder that he had been able for so long to lead a celibate and useless life. The last words he spoke to me were when bidding me farewell the next morning in a little arbour on his lawn. He said, "When you come down next week this place will be lovely, for the pink may will then all be out." That pink may first showed its blossom on the day of his death.

On Saturday, the 12th, though suffering at the time from cold, he walked through the pouring rain from the Egyptian Hall, after giving his entertainment, to the Garrick Club. On arriving there he was wet to the skin, but instead of returning home he sat down before a fire and dried his clothes without removing them. An attack of bronchitis immediately set in; it increased in virulence as the week progressed; he was compelled to cut out the songs in his entertainment, and, though he would not abandon his work, called in medical aid.

On Monday, the 21st, he was so prostrated that the general practitioner in attendance positively forbade his attempting to lecture, and Albert, with great reluctance, suffered an apologetic note to be issued. The congestion of the lungs increased, and on the next day Dr. Burrows was called in, but it was too late. On Tuesday evening the poor patient became insensible. He continued in that state throughout the night, and at half-past eight on Wednesday morning, the 23rd of May, while all London was making every preparation for the great national holiday, the Derby Day, Albert Smith peacefully and calmly breathed his last, in the presence of his wife and brother.

The news came upon me with a great shock. My wife had heard from time to time from Mrs. Albert Smith of her husband's illness, but the letters gave no indication of its dangerous character. Immediately on hearing of the death, within a few hours after its occurrence, we went off to Walham Green, to tender all possible consolation and assistance to the young widow; and at the door I met, for the first time, one who was afterwards to become a great friend of mine—the Reverend J. M. Bellew, by whom Albert had been married not twelve months before.

The funeral took place on the following Saturday at Brompton Cemetery, and Albert Smith was placed in the grave where three years before his father had been interred. The mourners were his brother Arthur; his father-in-law, Robert Keeley; his executor, Mr. Arthur Pratt Barlow; his solicitor, Mr. Edward Draper; the only other old friends present

being Richard Lane, A.R.A., and myself. It was Albert's constantly expressed wish that his funeral should be of the simplest and most private character, and this wish was strictly adhered to.

A far heavier trial was in store for me. In the beginning of the year my mother gave us to understand that she had reason to fear her health was breaking, and that she was threatened with a serious illness. During our absence from town late in the previous autumn, after the birth of my youngest son, my eldest boy had been on a visit to his grandmother at her little house in Kentish Town. She had an idea that in her endeavours to please and amuse the child she had over-exerted herself, but it was evident that she was out of health, and that an opinion other than that of her ordinary medical attendant should be obtained. Dr. Robert Lee, of Savile Row, was accordingly called in consultation, and his opinion, privately expressed to me, gave me occasion for the gravest fear.

That was in February, and the dear sufferer very shortly afterwards took to her bed, never to leave it alive. For six long months she lingered, suffering at times, I fear, intense agony, but bearing it always with wonderful calmness and Christian resignation. During that six months I think I scarcely missed one day in visiting her, sometimes coming, to her amusement, in my Volunteer uniform, though towards the last I always changed my dress—I did not seem like myself, she would say, in that unaccustomed garb. She passed away on the night of the 30th of August—one of the best and most devoted of women.

In the same year, at the early age of thirty-two, died Robert Brough; and I also lost a kind friend and early employer in Herbert Ingram, M.P. for Boston, the proprietor of the *Illustrated London News*, who perished in the *Lady Elgin*, an American steamer which was run into during an excursion trip on Lake Michigan, when three hundred of her passengers were drowned.

My literary work was being continued all this time with undiminished assiduity at the *Daily News*, where, on the death of good old William Weir, the position of editor had been filled by the appointment of Mr. Thomas Walker, who was accustomed to the duties of the office, and was an industrious and painstaking writer. I was doing plenty of work, too, for the *Illustrated Times*, where Mr. Henry Vizetelly invariably meted out strict justice towards me, uninfluenced by the advocacy of two or three warm admirers of Mr. Thackeray, who were on the staff, and who were eager for my dismissal.

I have a note in my diary for the 11th of February, 1860, to the effect that I went with Oxenford to the St. James's Theatre to witness the first performance of a burlesque called *Dido*. It was said to be the work of a novice—a young gentleman named Francis Cowley Burnand, who was believed to be still at Cambridge. Frank Talfourd came into the box during the course of the evening, and there gave utterance to two of his most ridiculous jokes. It was a bitter night, and some one was complaining of the cold. "You never wear a great-coat, Frank?" I said to him inquiringly. "No," he replied, "I never *was*!" During the performance a trireme filled with soldiers appeared at the back of the stage. "What is that?" said Frank, looking at it as it rocked violently. "That," said I, referring to the bill, "is a Roman galley." "Seems to me more buoyant than galley," said the inveterate punster.

I wrote also many essays and stories and poems for *All the Year Round*, the *Welcome Guest*, and a well-started but short-lived periodical, *Everybody's Journal*, which, I think, appeared about that time. In this year, too, I undertook for Messrs. Routledge the task of cutting down the *Life of Charles Mathews the Elder*, written by his widow, and originally appearing in three or four large volumes, and reproducing it with notes in a more handy shape. There was much good in the book, overlaid by a good deal of irrelevant matter, and I think I succeeded in turning out a readable volume, though I understood that old Mrs. Mathews, the original biographer, who was then still living,

never forgave me for having laid my sacrilegious hand on her, in one sense at least, *magnum opus*.

Immediately after my mother's death I went for rest and change for a few weeks at Scarborough; and on my return thence, the first business call I had was on October 1st from Mr. Maxwell, who came on a very important matter. In the previous year Messrs. Smith and Elder had opened up an entirely new vein in periodical literature by the establishment of the *Cornhill Magazine*, at the price of one shilling, under the editorship of Thackeray. I remember when I first read the prospectus being rash enough to think that the great Titmarsh, having been so successful in his antiseptic treatment of me, might possibly possess sufficient magnanimity to induce him to regard me with a little indulgence, and I wrote and forwarded to him, without remark, a little poem, which I may say now was as good as most magazine verse, and was suitable for his opening number. It came back by return of post, with a line from his secretary, who was "desired by Mr. Thackeray to return the enclosed."

The *Cornhill Magazine* was an enormous success, and Mr. Maxwell's idea was to bring out a somewhat similar periodical at the same price—without illustrations indeed, but giving more pages of literary matter as an equivalent. Mr. George Sala had undertaken the editorship, and had expressed a wish, in which Mr. Maxwell concurred, that I should act as assistant or working editor. Liberality was the order of the day; an office was to be engaged, good terms offered to contributors, the magazine was to be largely advertised, and everything was to be done to promote its success.

I was delighted to accept the offer; and as the first number was to be issued on the 1st of December, I began to set about my preparations at once. I had some difficulty in getting a serial story, for the leading lights of those days were most of them engaged, and Sala had promised that within a very short time he would begin a novel on his own account, from which we naturally expected great things. At last I obtained from a

lady who had never written previously for the press, and who was the wife of a provincial clergyman, a by no means brilliant, but quite sufficiently interesting "makeweight," story, without much incident, but remarkably well written, and giving a curious insight into Quaker life, the author having in her youth belonged to that community. It was called "For Better, for Worse," and perhaps may be best described as Trollope-and-milk.

In our first number, which was, like most first numbers, nothing like so good as its successors, Sala broke ground with an instalment of "Travels in the County of Middlesex," a series of sparkling essays, which I wonder have never been reprinted; Blanchard Jerrold wrote on the "Father of the French Press;" John Oxenford contributed an essay on the "Kalewala;" W. S. Austin sent some curious "Notes on Circumstantial Evidence;" and Sala, influenced by kindness rather than a strict adherence to his duty, insisted on my accepting a long poem by a Mr. Stigand called "The Northern Muse;" otherwise we were strong in verse. Mr. F. D. Finlay, who had never, to my knowledge, perpetrated poetry, before or since, sent me a remarkably pretty poem of a serious, not to say religious, tendency, called "Always with Us;" and there were contributions from two acknowledged poets, whose acquaintance I had recently made. One was Mortimer Collins, of whom I had heard frequently, whom I had read much, but whom I had never seen. It was plain also that he had never seen me, for during the Thackeray controversy he had written of me in a Plymouth paper, of which he was the correspondent, as a "pert little London sparrow." I asked him to call upon me in reference to the projected *Temple Bar*, and when I rose from my chair, and he found that my proportions were almost as massive as his own—though official etiquette precluded my decorating them with a velvet coat and a red tie—he looked greatly astonished. I at once reminded him of his description of me, over which we roared, and shook hands and remained close friends to his death.

To our first number he contributed one of his most delightful lyrics, "Under the Cliffs by the Sea," the first lines of which—

> "White-throated maiden, gay be thy carol
> Under the cliffs by the sea;
> Plays the soft wind with thy dainty apparel—
> Ah, but thou think'st not of me"

still remain in my mind.

The other was by Mr. Robert Buchanan, who came to my house in the Abbey Road, to which I had just removed, one evening in November, with a letter of introduction from W. H. Wills, who had previously spoken to me about him. Mr. Buchanan had recently arrived from Scotland to seek his fortune in London, and had greatly impressed Mr. Wills, not merely by his undoubted talents, but by the earnestness and gravity of his demeanour. He wrote a series of poems in our new magazine, the first one having "Temple Bar" for its subject, and became a constant contributor.

In gathering contributions for our first number, I improved my acquaintance with another man with whom I became very intimate—the Reverend J. M. Bellew. I had seen him, as before mentioned, at the time of Albert Smith's death; but had no further communication with him until I went to live in the Abbey Road, which was close by the church of which he was then incumbent. Sala particularly wished to have Mr. Bellew's name at that time amongst his contributors, and I accordingly called on "my minister," and induced him to send us an account of an episode in his recent travellings in the East, which he called "Over the Lebanon to Baalbek."

My small contribution to the first-born was a sonnet on Garibaldi.

"The Seven Sons of Mammon," by George Augustus Sala, was commenced in No. 2, taking the place of honour, the editor contributing in addition a further instalment of his "Travels in Middlesex," and a very remarkable article, "Annus Mirabilis," commenting on the various events of the

past expired year. Robert Buchanan made his first appearance as a prose-writer with an essay on Robert Herrick. There was a story by Sutherland Edwards; a scientific paper on "Light;" a lyric by Mortimer Collins; a descriptive paper, "The Houseless Poor," by myself; and a poem, five and a half pages long, "Italia Rediviva," by the unconquered Stigand.

The magazine made its mark, and grew better every month. It kept me constantly occupied; for Sala had so much literary and journalistic work to do that, beyond giving his name to the cover and the supervision to the printed sheets, he left most of the detail to me. I used to go to him from time to time at the chambers which, with a friend, he then occupied in Clement's Inn—I always used to think that the names on the door, Mr. George Augustus Sala, Mr. Rudolph Gustavus Glover, were highly suggestive of a farce—and to which admission was obtained by throwing a penny through the letter-box of the always sported oak, and show him what I proposed, in which he almost invariably acquiesced.

Blanchard Jerrold, Charles Kenney, Sutherland Edwards, H. W. Sotheby, who wrote an interesting series of papers on ancient classical novelists; Mortimer Collins, who, in addition to his lovely lyrics, wrote a series of delightful prose papers descriptive of his rambles through different English counties; Edward Wilberforce, Professor D. T. Ansted, who was our regular "scientist;" W. S. Austin, Oxenford, Buchanan, and Mrs. Brotherton, teller of excellent stories, were amongst our early contributors.

In 1861 I made the acquaintance, soon to ripen into friendship, of Alfred Austin, who had just then made his success with his satire, *The Season*, and he wrote many pretty poems of a lighter calibre in our pages. Towards the end of the same year appeared in *Temple Bar* a story called "The Mystery of Fernwood," the first contribution of one whose work perhaps was more useful than that of any writer in it—Miss M. E. Braddon.

I do not "set up" for a prophet, or, like the gentleman immortalised by Dr. Johnson's reproof, I should speedily have to sit down; but I am always pleased to remember that I had sufficient editorial sagacity to detect latent genius in the first production of Miss Braddon's ever submitted to my notice. I was writing the framework of, and generally selecting and editing the stories intended for, a Christmas number of the *Welcome Guest*, when I was asked by Mr. Maxwell, the proprietor, who had supplied me with a pile of MS., whether I had discovered anything special amongst them. I told him that they were all of the ordinary calibre save one, a story with an extraordinary title, "Christmas at Rilston Kagstar," which, clearly told, was full of new and genuine fun. This, I afterwards discovered, was one of Miss Braddon's earliest literary efforts. Her next contribution to *Temple Bar* was some "In Memoriam" verses on the Prince Consort's death in December, 1861, and in the next month she gave a decided fillip to our circulation and our renown with the opening chapters of "Aurora Floyd."

For many months *Temple Bar* engrossed most of my attention, but I found time to string together and publish, under the title *After Office Hours*, a number of reprinted essays, stories, and poems which I had unearthed from various periodicals. In the autumn my wife and I, accompanied by Alfred Austin, went on a long tour in Switzerland, through the Bernese Oberland and to Chamounix, where, at the Hôtel de Londres, we had the rooms formerly occupied by poor Albert Smith, to whose memory a tablet had recently been erected in the village church by his brother Arthur, who himself died in the October of this year. In this trip I, too, was very nearly losing my life. The weather had been extremely hot; we had ridden on mule-back from Chamounix to Martigny, a journey of twelve hours, and, at its conclusion, I, who had been ailing and "out of sorts" for some days, felt seriously ill, and went to bed. I suppose I must have had some slight touch of sunstroke, with gastric fever and certain indications of cholera.

Clear-headed Alfred Austin telegraphed at once, indicating the symptoms, to the English physician at Geneva, begging him to hurry to my aid; but many hours necessarily elapsed before he could arrive, during which I lay in fearful agony, becoming weaker and weaker, and desperately alarming the village medico, who was probably a farrier, who for all my convulsions proposed internally a tisane, and externally a cataplasm.

But there was hope in the sound of Dr. Metcalfe's cheery voice, and encouragement in the light of his pleasant eye. For twelve hours after his arrival I was hovering between life and death; but under Providence his skill and the devoted attention of my two companions turned the scale, and, though as weak as a child for days, and unable to stand, I recovered.

In the late autumn I made my first appearance as a public lecturer in the assembly-rooms of the Eyre Arms Tavern, under the auspices of the St. John's Wood Literary Society, of which I was a member. The subject was a literary one—comments on, and descriptions of, the work of various poets and prose writers who seemed to me to be scarcely held in sufficient repute, with extracts from their writings—and delivered with as much dramatic force as I could command. It was a success; and, finding I had secured a new means of money-making, I wrote another lecture, much more dramatic in its character, called "Modern Society," which I first delivered at the Bayswater Athenæum, and which was speedily in great demand.

Those were very pleasant days in the Abbey Road, where we had for near neighbours and intimate friends Charles Fechter and J. M. Bellew. The former, who had made an extraordinary impression on his first appearance in England as Ruy Blas, a performance which, as far as my judgment is concerned, has never been excelled on any stage, had created a perfect *furore* with his Hamlet, his conception of the character having much mellowed and improved under the advice of our other friend Bellew. Fechter was living in the Marlborough

Road, close by me, with his wife and two children; and an odd *entourage*, the principal component parts of which were Gassier the singer, a Dr. Caplin, and an ex-fencing master whose name I forget. Fechter was singularly abstemious in those days, eating little and drinking nothing but weak claret and water, though he had a good cellar, and was especially proud of some 1820 port, which he was always offering to his friends; a man of singular fascination, sweetness, and amiability, though intolerant of humbug, and savage where he disliked. His keenness of perception and promptitude of action were in curious contrast with Bellew's easy, kindly inability of negation and *laissez-aller* in the conduct of his affairs.

I do not think there was ever a man more thoroughly misunderstood by the majority of people, even by those who thought they knew him, than John Montesquieu Bellew. He generally passed for a sharp, shrewd, scheming man of the world, always on the look-out to better his position, and not very scrupulous as to the means; much of a lady-killer, and not a little of a charlatan.

There were never more mistaken notions than all of these, though I am bound to state that they were mostly, if not entirely, due to the man himself. Never was a man so wholly and completely his own enemy as Bellew; never did a man so persistently and yet so unintentionally do the wrong thing in the wrong place. He was not much given to mixing with professional divines, but had he been he would have reserved his strongest and most piquant story for his Bishop's ear. Half the stories told to his detriment were not seen in that light by himself, and, though perfectly false, were left uncontradicted, owing to a curious feeling which left him somewhat flattered by being considered the hero of them. He was not very firm, or very strong-minded, or very decisive; but he was frank, kindly, generous, and hospitable, a kind and affectionate husband, an excellent friend, and a good father. I lived in close intimacy with him for years, and in his best, freest, and

happiest days during his ministry at St. Mark's; later, when he was gradually slipping into what he called the Charles Honeyman line at Bedford Chapel; latest of all, when he had renounced his sacred calling and abjured his old faith, when he had christened himself "Poetry on Wheels," and was perpetually engaged in travelling in England and America in delivering his recitations. Some of his friends blamed him, and some pitied him; but to a few good and staunch and true who knew the man, his affectionate disposition, his warm generous heart, he was lovable to the last. By those his memory is still cherished in the full feeling that they could far more readily have spared a more strictly well-regulated person.

It used to be said that Mr. Bellew was a born actor, but in the days when I knew him he was too portly and too unwieldy to have shone on the stage. Undoubtedly he was never seen to such advantage as in the pulpit, where his figure loomed large and his aspect was commanding; his ecclesiastical millinery was perfect, and he wore, when preaching, cuffs of French cambric—such as used to be a portion of a widow's dress in the days when widows' mourning was in vogue—round his plump white hands. I do not think I ever heard a voice of such magnificent *timbre*, and he knew exactly how and when to employ every note in its gamut. He never read anything so well as the Church service—a straightforward, appreciative bit of magnificent declamation, free from "intoning" or sing-song of any kind. In his ordinary readings he was best in Shakespeare, whom he worshipped and knew thoroughly; his "comic recitations" were painful exhibitions.

When I first knew Mr. Bellew he was at the height of his popularity: his church in Hamilton Terrace, a very large one, was crammed, seats were at a premium, and crowds of persons lined the aisles. Then all seemed suddenly to go wrong: he quarrelled with the vicar whom he represented, and with many of those parishioners who had been his earnest supporters. He gave up the incumbency, and rented Bedford Chapel in

New Oxford Street, which was conducted very much on the Sherrick-cum-Honeyman lines. A few of the faithful followed their pastor from the pleasant groves of the Evangelist even to that dirty slum, and for a time the place prospered. But only for a time. Then Mr. Bellew was one of the first to take advantage of an Act of Parliament, that he had worked hard to get passed, by which he was at liberty to unfrock himself; and no sooner was this done than he joined the Church of Rome, a proceeding which undoubtedly alienated many of the friends who had been very useful and true to him. He died in 1874.

As a man of business Fechter was energetic, trustworthy, and far-seeing; as a stage-manager, beyond compare. Mr. Augustus Harris *père*, who was reckoned excellent in this line, admitted Fechter's superiority, and could not account for it. I once heard him say that it would be worth while to give him a large salary to do nothing but sit on the stage during the rehearsal, and produce the piece.

Fechter took me greatly into his confidence in his business matters, in many of which, such as the making of engagements, etc., I was able to be of use to him. The following letter will show the earnestness of the man, both as friend and manager:

"J'ai lu la lettre de L——, mon cher Edmund, et j'avoue que je n'y comprends rien! C'est à dire, si:

Je comprends que malgré mon grand désir de ramener L—— au Princess, et de le replacer à son propre ligne, il m'y faut renoncer.

Je peux très bien *payer de ma poche* pour parfaire les appointemens que demande votre ami, mais je ne puis forcer un directeur à faire une chose *que je ne ferais point à sa place:* laisser le droit absolu à l'artiste de refuser les rôles qui lui sont distribués est rendre tout pouvoir de direction *impossible.*

Je présume que L—— ne tient pas à l'affaire, et que cela le rend plus exigent peut-être qu'il ne convient? Je laisse encore la porte ouverte jusqu'à demain soir, 18 Juin. Après demain je ferai la distribution des rôles, et il n'y aura plus à y revenir.

Dites bien à L—— que ce n'est pas seulement un simple désappointement d'artiste que j'éprouve, mais un vrai chagrin d'ami.

Vous qui me connaissez, vous me comprendrez s'il ne me comprend pas.

À vous, cher ami, de tout mon cœur,
CH. FECHTER."

I have another reminiscence in connection with this portion of my life. Fechter, wishing to avail himself of the services of a rising young actress, who shall be nameless, requested me to arrange the engagement with her. After some preliminary talk, she called upon me one day at the Post Office, accompanied by her father, then an actor in a very small way. After we had settled the matter, the father said to me:

"You will have a pleasant sinecure here, Mr. Yates."

I mildly hinted that, although the duties were not absolutely slavery, the position was not a sinecure.

"Equivalent to it," he said, with a fine theatrical air. "You gentlemen in Government offices are indeed well off. I said to my daughter, as we walked up your grand staircase, 'Well, my dear, your father would give up all his dreams of ambition, and be content to settle down here on a mere five hundred a year.'"

Whatever his dreams of ambition may have been, his actual salary probably never exceeded thirty shillings a week.

The International Exhibition being held in the year 1862, a portion of my work was devoted to articles descriptive of it and its contents to the various journals with which I was connected. It was a year of much hospitality too, and one's labours were considerably interfered with by the necessity of entertaining or contributing to the entertainment of provincial and foreign friends, by whom London was thronged. On the 29th of March I made my *début* as an after-dinner speaker, being, to my great astonishment, called upon by Dickens, presiding over the banquet in aid of the Artists' General Benevolent Fund, to return thanks for the Volunteers. I caused some amusement, I remember, by stating that if the sentry then on guard at the National Gallery had been summoned to return thanks for the army, he could not have been more surprised.

In June my wife and I, and Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Ward, Fechter, and Bellew, paid a delightful visit to Warwick, Kenilworth, and Stratford-on-Avon. At the latter place we were most hospitably entertained by the vicar; Fechter, then at the height of his Hamlet triumph, was delighted with all he saw.

In the spring I had added to my labours by accepting an engagement from my friend Mr. F. D. Finlay to write for his paper, the *Belfast Northern Whig*, a weekly article called "The Looker-on in London," which I continued for some time.

During the previous winter, too, I had assisted Fechter in the preparation of a romantic drama founded on *Les Couteaux d'Or* by Paul Féval, and called by us *The Golden Daggers*. The piece was produced at the Princess's on Saturday, April 19th, before a very remarkable audience, and, though admirably stage-managed and excellently acted, was to all intents and purposes a failure. The reason of this was that the play was, in all probability, a bad one; that there were certain incidents in it which, intended to be serious, almost verged upon the ludicrous; but one great cause of the failure was undoubtedly that the key of the plot was contained in the story told by the hero immediately on the rising of the curtain in the prologue; and as two-thirds of the audience at that time had not arrived at the theatre, or were engaged in shuffling into their seats, they heard nothing of what was said, and could comprehend nothing that followed.

In the autumn of this year I determined to attempt to increase my income by launching out into a new line. The lectures of which I have previously spoken had been in great request—I had given them in all kinds of places and before all kinds of audiences: in London, and the suburbs, and the provinces; before members of literary institutions at Islington and Bristol, and the Beaumont Institute at Bow, at Fulham, and Dorking; before the employés of large firms, such as Messrs. Copestake, Moore, and Crampton, and Messrs. Shool-

bred; before the cunning workers in metals at Colebrookdale; at neighbouring Stockwell and distant Hull—and it occurred to me that as the lecture, "Modern Society," undoubtedly possessed a certain dramatic quality, and as I myself was credited with some of the requirements for the histrionic art, I might possibly remodel and extend this into a regular entertainment. My old friend Albert Smith's place had never been filled—his room at the Egyptian Hall was at that time actually vacant—and it would, I thought, be a great thing if I could adjust his mantle, and tread in his successful footsteps. One shortcoming on my part, however, immediately suggested itself: a certain amount of singing and playing was absolutely necessary in such a "show," and I knew no note of music and had not a scrap of voice.

In this dilemma I bethought me of Mr. Harold Power, son of the famous Irish comedian, a man of great humour, an excellent singer and mimic, who had at one time held an appointment in the Post Office, but who was, I believe, acting in the provinces. I put myself into communication with him at once, and made arrangements for his joining me later on. Then I engaged the Mont Blanc room at the Egyptian Hall for a term, had it beautifully decorated under Mr. Beverly's superintendence, and set to work to recast, amplify, and render much more dramatic what had hitherto been known as "Modern Society."

The entertainment as I finally wrote it was in two parts: it was called "Mr. Edmund Yates's Invitations to Evening Parties and the Seaside," and the nature of the amusement offered may be gathered from the title. Perhaps, however, what the entertainment really was is best explained in the following criticism from the pen of Mr. John Forster in the *Examiner*:

MR. EDMUND YATES AND MR. POWER AT EGYPTIAN HALL.

The entertainment given by these gentlemen under the style of *Invitations to Evening Parties and the Seaside* is better than its name, which has nothing but eccentricity to recommend it. The

entertainment itself is in fact so good that we predict for Messrs. Yates and Power, if it please them to remain fellow-workers in this manner, a success rivalling that of the late Mr. Albert Smith in permanence and in solidity.

In the first place, the comfort of the audience is as carefully respected as it was in the old Mont Blanc days. There are no fines inflicted, no uncomfortable seats. The room is gaily decorated into some suggestion of a conservatory, and the little stage is prettily appointed, with its couple of successive scenes—a room, and a verandah opening on the seashore.

On the stage excellent actors, well remembered and respected by the public, live again in their sons, who amuse the company for a couple of hours, by holding their bright little mirror up to social nature in a performance utterly remote from staginess. In each scene the humours represented are thrown up in the natural course of easy conversation between two intimate friends. In the second scene, at the seaside, Mr. Power does indeed mount a stool to telegraph with his handkerchief to fellow-lodgers on the shore ; but in the main the acting consists in appearing not to act ; and this difficult end Mr. Edmund Yates may be said to have accomplished perfectly. In a large theatre there is a stress or breadth of manner necessary to give effect even to the right representation of naturalness, that makes art manifest even in the most polished representation of every-day life according to the way of the modern French school. In the little room at Egyptian Hall there is no need even for a faint touch of the rouge and violet powder of dramatic style, and Messrs. Yates and Power get rid of it altogether. Of the two pleasant friends Mr. Yates personates the more phlegmatic, Mr. Power the more mercurial. The quiet, unenthusiastic, and absolutely natural manner of Mr. Yates, who talks at ease to his friend, as if there were no audience within a thousand miles of him, keeps the whole tone of the two hours' talk pleasantly in harmony with the common humour of the audience. Mr. Power never exceeds the gaiety of ordinary social intercourse in his vivacity ; the talk is always amusing, never overstrained into a cleverness beyond the bent of social intercourse, and the gay bits, the merry well-told anecdotes, the happy snatches of mimicry, grow out of the course of easy conversation, and subside into it again as unobtrusively and lightly as they ought always to do, but often don't, in actual life.

It is noticeable also, that while the entertainment consists very much in talk about other folks behind their backs—first, of certain people who might distinguish themselves by divers peculiarities at divers stages in the course of the formalities of an evening party; then of people who make their peculiarities more or less conspicuous in their enjoyment of the unrestraint of the seaside—all risk is avoided of giving an air of scandal to the conversation. Nothing could be more genial than the prevailing tone of all the gossip. Even the lady's doctor may look without a frown at his own image as Mr. Edmund Yates presents it to him in his glass; and the old gentleman whose preliminary crumbling of bread on the table-cloth, and final embarrassment when he gets up after supper to propose the health of the host, subject to embarrassing asides from Jack Bagot, the funny man, might see without indignation how Mr. Edmund Yates rises to imitate him for the edification of his friend Mr. Power. As for that friend Mr. Power, his skill as a mimic seems to be unbounded; and when he shows, for the edification of his friend Mr. Yates, with a sly drollery that no man can resist, the manners and voices of the actors of the day, now imitating Mr. Webster, now Mr. Boucicault, now Mr. Paul Bedford, now Mr. Compton, now Mr. Buckstone, now Mr. Charles Kean, the little house is kept in a roar. Messrs. Compton and Buckstone are wonderful imitations, but the reproduction of Mr. Charles Kean is a joke to scream over. Capital, too, is Mr. Power's singing, in reply to a male serenade of his own, of "Du, du liegst mir im Herzen," in a sentimental lady's voice.

Considering the skill of these two gentlemen and the durable character of their plan of entertainment, which, retaining the well-chosen manner, admits of any degree of variation in the matter, we think it is a question of will with them, and not of power, whether they will become as much an institution of the town as the town's old friend Albert Smith was in his day.

And here let me explain a certain similarity between the first part of my entertainment and one of John Parry's social sketches, produced a couple of months later under the title of "Mrs. Roseleaf's Evening Party." John Parry was an old and intimate friend of mine, and had no warmer admirer than myself, and the subjoined letter will show how curiously two

persons, without the slightest collusion, may hit upon the same idea almost at the same time:

"15 Pembridge Place, December 5, 1862.

Dear Edmund,—I have only just returned from the north, and am very glad to hear from our friend Frith that everything looks so promising for Monday night. I should like to have been there and given a hand. But I am glad to see by the *Times* of to-day that there is no chance of getting in. I wanted to have seen you, as I should like you to know that, as far as I can see, by reading the first part of your capital bill, you have chosen the subject which I have worked into a song, and have ready to bring out when I withdraw "Colleen Bawn.' It is, in fact, a gleaning from subjects I did in my entertainment some years ago. Doubtless the subject will not be treated exactly in the same way by us, mine being merely a musical scene, while yours is in a more elaborated form. I did not like your entertainment to come out without first mentioning that we had happened to stumble on the same subject.

Hoping to have an early opportunity of hearing you, believe me, with every good wish, faithfully yours,

JOHN PARRY."

We produced our entertainment on the 8th of December to an overflowing audience of celebrities, and it ran with more or less success, but always on paying terms, until the following May, when Mr. Power, for whom a good mercantile position abroad had been obtained by his friends, was compelled to leave me. I could not go on by myself, I had no inclination to adopt another colleague, and—I had had enough of it. So the show was shut up, and my evenings were again devoted to literary work.

In this year I witnessed the arrival of the Princess Alexandra in London, previous to her marriage with the Prince of Wales, from the windows of the *Daily Telegraph* office in Fleet Street, and was particularly struck by the happy tact of Lord Alfred Paget, who was in immediate attendance on the newly-arrived guest, and who, by his invariable good-humour and pleasant *badinage*, soothed and turned aside what might have been the anger of the crowd exposed to fearful pressure.

I was also present in June at the inauguration of the Albert Memorial in South Kensington, where the Princess may be said to have made her first public appearance, and where I was struck with the singular presence of mind and easy grace of the Prince of Wales, then a very young man.

In this year, too, I met Lord Cardigan at dinner, and had much talk with him. He spoke very kindly of my uncle, Colonel Richard Brunton, with whom he had been intimate, and Major Stone of the same regiment (13th Light Dragoons). The dinner at which we met was given only a few days after an action had been tried, upon the decision of which Lord Cardigan vindicated his character against some slur cast upon his bravery at Balaclava, in a book called *Letters by a Staff Officer*. The subject was, of course, carefully avoided at the dinner; but I had a talk subsequently about the famous Balaclava charge with Sir George Wombwell, who, as a cornet in the 17th Lancers, took part therein.

Though it was so many years ago, he, of course, remembered every detail of it. He had two horses killed under him, was very nearly taken prisoner by the Russians, but managed to catch a stray horse—there were many about—and rode to Lord George Paget's Heavy Brigade, which he saw advancing. He was close by Lord Cardigan when Captain Nolan, the aide-de-camp, came with instructions to Lord Lucan to charge upon the guns. Sir George Wombwell was of opinion that there was a doubt as to which guns were mentioned—those on the heights or those in the valley about a mile and a half away. The latter were supposed to be those indicated, and the brilliant charge commenced.

Sir George spoke of Lord Cardigan as the incarnation of bravery. He cantered along at first about forty yards in front of his regiment, as though he were riding in the Row; he did not draw his sword until he had made some progress, and then principally with the idea of waving the men back, who were pressing upon him. It is always difficult, even in Yeomanry field-days, to prevent a cavalry charge becoming a race, and,

of course, when the men saw the guns in front of them and firing at them, their anxiety to get forward and cut down the gunners was too great, so that the charge finally became a pell-mell race. Sir George Wombwell saw Captain Nolan hit by the shot which killed him. Though killed, the body for some little time maintained its balance on the horse, and was carried past my informant with its arm extended, the horse going at full gallop. A minute after it fell to the ground.

On the morning of Christmas Eve in this year Mr. Thackeray's servant, going to call his master as usual, found him lying dead, with his hands clasped above his head. The news came to me in the afternoon, as I was calling upon a friend at the Reform Club, and gave me a certain shock, as for ever destroying the hope which I had entertained that the breach between me and the great writer might eventually have been healed. For many months any bitterness which I may have at one time entertained against him had died out, and when I treated of his loss in print I was able conscientiously to claim my share of the great and general grief. What I said in the *Northern Whig* was reprinted in the *Daily Telegraph*, and I had several letters warmly approving of my words from persons who at the time of the difficulty had taken keen interest in it as strong partisans on the Thackeray side.

In the autumn of 1863 I was residing at Mapesbury House, Willesden Lane, owned, but not then occupied, by Mr. John Anderson, the well-known horse-dealer of Green-Street—a capital old-fashioned house, standing in a large garden, and surrounded by a congeries of stabling and loose-boxes dedicated to the comfort and well-being of Mr. Anderson's highly valuable stock-in-trade. There were also a miniature farm, a tan-ride furnished with various obstacles for leaping experiments, a large staff of rough-riders, helpers, etc., all within half an hour of Hyde Park Corner.

It was a delightful place, but, in those days, somewhat difficult of access, and not too easy to find. Our friends used to come to great grief in their attempts to discover our where-

abouts, as is ludicrously set forth in the following letter from John Parry:

"4 Colville Gardens, Bayswater, January 2, 1864.

My dear Edmund,—I think it but right you should have a statement of the events of last evening.

I was unfortunately rather late home from rehearsal, and could not be at the Friths' (who, you know, were kindly going to take me to your house in their carriage) until twelve minutes past the half-hour (five).

I was of course sorry to have lost my chance, seeing they were gone on my arrival at their house, and after ascertaining your whereabouts, I started in a cab; and simply to make the story short, I was exactly *one* hour and forty minutes in that blessed cab!.

The man took me a *near* way of his own (!); and on our arrival in Willesden Lane, I knocked and rang at *three* large gates, but nobody knew anything about your house. It was bitterly cold, and what with anxiety and 'the shivers,' I at last was obliged to return home by Kilburn Gate to Friths', where I left a message for them expressing my regret. It was now exactly half-past seven, and I started in the cab at ten to six.

You would have pitied me had you seen my loneliness and despair. No house; no friends; no dinner! We got into a road without any gas, and three robbers looked in at the window; at least, I thought they were robbers.

I kept crying out, 'Take me beyond the cemetery!' At last I should have been rather pleased if they had taken me in the cemetery. So, apologizing to Mrs. Yates and yourself for my apparent rudeness, you will quite believe it was not for want of perseverance I did not reach you.—Yours ever faithfully,

JOHN PARRY."

I often wondered why Fate had sent me to live in a place so apparently unsuitable for a literary man with constant engagements in town, and at length I found out.

We were in a tolerable strait at *Temple Bar*. Some one who was to write a novel for us—at this lapse of time I quite forget whom—had sent to say that it was impossible for him to fulfil his promise. I was in despair, and did not know which way to turn. Miss Braddon was impossible—she had just commenced

"The Doctor's Wife;" Mr. Sala was engaged on the "Adventures of Captain Dangerous," and was regularly supplying his essays, "Breakfast in Bed;" poor Dutton Cook's "Trials of the Tredgolds," though a very pretty story, had been pronounced to lack the necessary power of holding the public, and I was instructed not to go to him. The proprietor offered extremely liberal terms, and I put myself in communication with Mrs. Oliphant, "Holme Lee," Messrs. Whyte-Melville, Shirley Brooks, and George Lawrence; but all were engaged. We wanted a novel badly, and in the dilemma some one very near home suggested, "Why not write one yourself?"

Such an idea had never entered my mind, or, if it had, had been summarily dismissed with a feeling that, though I had written short tales by the score, I had not sufficient staying power for a continuous story. But now somehow the idea was not so repugnant to me. I had long had certain vague ideas, germinated by the surroundings in which I lived, floating in my mind, and I thought perhaps I might be able to weave them together. At all events, I told the proprietor that I was prepared to throw myself into the breach—a suggestion which he received, if without any expression of enthusiastic delight, at least without a refusal. He named a modest sum, which in the event of my succeeding was to be more, and bade me go in and do my best.

The truth was, I had in my mind a new idea for a new character in fiction. There was living in those days a good-looking and very fascinating young woman, who rode much to hounds, and whom Landseer had painted as the "Pretty Horsebreaker," of whom I knew a little and had heard a great deal; and I thought out a plan by which I could utilize her, placing her amidst the Mapesbury stables and tan-rides and all the surroundings with which I was so familiar, and which was new and hitherto untrodden ground.

If I had never lived at Mapesbury I do not believe that I should have ever written a novel; but "local colour" always had been a suggestion for an incentive to my novel-writing.

Thus *Land at Last*, with its artist life and Bohemian atmosphere, had its origin in a story told to me by Mr. Frith, R.A., and was written when I was in almost daily communion with him and other brethren of the brush. The story of the *Forlorn Hope* came to me after a sojourn in a great house in Scotland, where an outbreak of scarlatina dispersed the party; in *Nobody's Fortune* and *Castaway* the action took place, for the most part, in Devon and Cornwall, in which counties I was engaged on Post Office business while the stories were being written; and the *Yellow Flag* opens in the town of Southampton, and with the scene on board a P. and O. ship, both place and action having been frequently studied by me while staying with Captain Black. In connection with this subject I may mention that the names of all the *dramatis personæ* in *Black Sheep* are those of personal friends of my own, while in *Wrecked in Port* not a character appears whose surname is not to be found among the list of Post Office officials at the time.

So I wrote three or four chapters of "Broken to Harness," and read them aloud to the criticism of my wife and my friend Parkinson, then staying with me. They expressed their belief in the interest of the story and the goodness of the style, but both agreed that the sequence of the chapters should be altered. This view being also adopted by Alfred Austin, to whom I read them immediately after, I accepted it, made my third chapter my first, and went steadily to work. The first instalment appeared in the number of *Temple Bar* for March, 1864, and the story was continued from month to month for ten or twelve numbers. During its progress I received great encouragement from the short criticisms of such of the press as noticed periodical literature, and from the kindly letters of Miss Braddon, who wrote to me several times in its praise.

When the book appeared in three volumes I had no cause to complain, for it was extensively and very favourably received. The notice in the dread *Athenæum* was written, as I afterwards discovered, by the editor, Mr. Hepworth Dixon, and said, "It is a first novel, and a better work of fiction has not for many a

week come under our notice." The *Standard* mentioned it as "very far above the average of the tales which overload our table." The *Globe* said, "There is an easy cleverness, a pleasant sparkling increasing to brilliancy at times, a freshness of spirit which makes the whole thing, from beginning to end, delightful reading for wearied or idle people;" and the *Morning Star*, "for vigour and fidelity," infinitely preferred my sketches of life in a Government office to those of a brother novelist.

My Pretty Horsebreaker, her life and death, was, as I hoped and almost anticipated, the success of the book. On all sides I received the doubtful compliment that no one thought I could have done anything so good. The *Spectator* said: "Mr. Yates has developed power which, to many who have read his previous writings, will be quite unexpected. They expected, of course, good, pointed, salted writing, pleasant to read even apart from its subject, full of humour and free of that affectation of buffoonery which ruins so many of his school, but they hardly looked for anything quite so good as Kate Mellon. The Pretty Horsebreaker—who despises conventionalisms, makes a proposal of marriage, cannot become a lady, yet is a good and pure woman—is almost as clear to the reader's eyes as if she had been photographed. She is alive, and so are most of the subordinate characters," etc. The best character in the book, said the then existent *Press*, is Kate Mellon, "a fresh face in the long gallery of modern fiction. When all the world writes novels, he must have a quick invention who can produce something new."

I sent the book to Dickens, who paid me the compliment of reading it at once, and writing to me immediately he had read it. "I have read your book with much delight and some surprise," he said, "and have been profoundly affected by the last portions of it. It has touched me deeply, and moved me to many tears."

Thenceforward it was plain I must continue to write novels.

Mr. Maxwell had already secured me to follow on my suc-

cess in *Temple Bar* by writing a story for the same magazine, the first chapters of which were to appear within a month or two. The flattering notices of "Broken to Harness" no sooner appeared than I was waited upon by Mr. Edward Tinsley, senior partner of the firm of Tinsley Brothers, who offered me what I then considered large terms for a novel to be complete in three-volume shape within a certain given and, as I thought, very short time. But I had struck a new vein, my writing was in great demand, and it was evident that I must make the most of the good fortune which had unexpectedly fallen upon me. From that time until the end of 1874 I was never without a novel or two in progress.

The year previously I lost my excellent friend Frank Smedley. By the death of a distant cousin he had long been in easy circumstances, and after his father's death continued to reside in the winter with his mother in Grove Lodge, Regent's Park, where he could get fresh air without going beyond the precincts of his garden, and where he was in the immediate neighbourhood of the Zoological Gardens, his favourite resort. He had purchased for himself a charming estate called Beechwood, within a very short distance of Marlow, where he resided in the summer months. Late in April 1864 I dined with him at Grove Lodge, and thought him better and brighter than I had seen him for some long time. When the other guests left the dining-table he asked me to remain, and talked to me with great spirit and interest about the work on which I was then engaged, about some horses he had bought, about his desire to get away speedily into the country and enjoy the beauties of the coming summer, about a dozen little trifles, into all of which he entered with even more than his ordinary zest.

I left him, promising to return the next week and to settle an early date for visiting him at Beechwood. On Sunday morning, the 1st of May, he was found by his servant, who came to call him, in a state of stupor, speedily followed by a succession of epileptic fits, and by Sunday evening he was dead.

By his death I lost one of my kindest and best friends.

Having given up the "Lounger" in the *Illustrated Times*, I commenced a series of articles of the same nature, which were published every Monday in the *Morning Star*. They were entitled "The Flâneur," and attracted a good deal of attention. The editor of the journal at that time was Mr. Samuel Lucas, a brother-in-law of Mr. John Bright, and a man of singular sweetness of disposition and charm of manner. At his death he was succeeded by Mr. Justin McCarthy, now the well-known member of Parliament, with whom I have since lived on intimate terms; while Mr. Russell, now editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, Mr. Charles Cooper, now editor of the *Scotsman*, and other men of mark, were on the staff.

My connection with the *Star*, in which, besides the "Flâneur," I wrote leading articles and reviews, and contributed some stories and essays to the series called "Readings by Starlight" in the evening edition, lasted for several years, and was much valued by me.

When Mr. Sala retired from the editorship of *Temple Bar*, I succeeded him, and was in that position in 1866, when the magazine was purchased by Mr. Bentley, for whom I edited it for about twelve months. I resigned the berth, to Mr. Bentley's regret, expressed in a kindly letter in June 1867, for the purpose of taking the editorship of *Tinsleys' Magazine*, then about to be established. This new enterprise was started with all liberality and energy, with a number of excellent contributors, with the advantage of having the first-fruits of Dr. Russell's attempts at novel-writing. But the great special's *coup d'essai* in the new field was not a particularly happy one, and triumphant success, such as had attended the establishment of *Cornhill* and *Temple Bar*, was no longer to be commanded by the projectors of shilling magazines.

CHAPTER XI.

A DICKENS CHAPTER.

To Charles Dickens there are references, full and frequent, throughout these volumes. That it should be so is a pleasant necessity; for during the last years of his life he was so large a feature in mine, his influence over me as a friend, counsellor, companion, and employer, was so powerful, and his regard for me so great, that the record of my career during that period owes much of whatever interest it may possess to his connection with it. In addition therefore to these passing references, I have thought it advisable to devote a separate chapter to chronicling my experience of him in such various phases of his life as were familiar to me, not without a hope of giving some new insight into his character. With Forster's *Life* and the *Letters* collected and published by loving hands already before the world, this might appear a somewhat difficult task; but my relations with the man, whom since my childhood I had, I may almost say, worshipped, were so close, the intimacy into which, notwithstanding his nineteen years of seniority, he admitted me was so great, in our views and sympathies there was, if I may venture to say it, so much in common, that I was always proud to think he felt my society congenial to him, and permitted me an exceptional insight into his inner life.

The nineteen years' seniority was not reflected in the terms of our companionship or our converse. "Fancy my being nineteen years older than this fellow!" said he one day to his

eldest daughter, putting his hand on my shoulder. The young lady promptly declared there was a mistake somewhere, and that I was rather the elder of the two. And certainly, except in the height of his domestic troubles, Dickens, until within a couple of years of his death—when, even before he started for America, his health was, to unprejudiced eyes, manifestly beginning to break—in bodily and mental vigour, in buoyancy of spirits and keenness of appreciation, remained extraordinarily young.

This, I think, is to be gleaned from the *Letters*, but is not to be found in Forster's *Life*. The fact, I take it, is that the friendship between Dickens and Forster, as strong on both sides in '70 as it was in '37, was yet of a different kind. Forster, partly owing to a natural temperament, partly to harassing official work and ill-health, was almost as much over, as Dickens was under, their respective actual years; and though Forster's shrewd common sense, sound judgment, and deep affection for his friend commanded, as was right, Dickens's loving and grateful acceptance of his views, and though the communion between them was never for a moment weakened, it was not as a companion "in his lighter hour" that Dickens in his latter days looked on Forster. Perhaps of all Dickens's friends, the man in whom he most recognised the ties of old friendship and pleasant companionship existing to the last was Wilkie Collins; and of the warm-hearted hero-worship of Charles Kent he had full appreciation.

To me, from the first time I saw him, when he grasped my hand at Tavistock House in '54,* to the last, when I took leave of him as he was dressing to go out to dinner, in his bedroom in the house in Hyde Park Place which he had hired for the season of '70, he was always affectionate, helpful, and unreserved. "Pray don't think, or pretend to think," he wrote in July '58, in reply to some remark of mine, "for a moment that I can fail to be interested in your letters, be they ever so numerous." "Chronically," he says in reply to another letter,

* See p. 174.

written on behalf of someone else, "when I have a book to write I give myself up to it. Waywardly, my small private rubs make me uncertain in my humour sometimes, and unwilling to tie myself to the slightest engagement." But I always found him not merely accessible, but ready to throw himself heart and soul into the business brought before him, as though his own fortune had been dependent on it.

I have heard Dickens described by those who knew him as aggressive, imperious, and intolerant, and I can comprehend the accusation; but to me his temper was always of the sweetest and kindest. He would, I doubt not, have been easily bored, and would not have scrupled to show it; but he never ran the risk. He was imperious in the sense that his life was conducted on the *sic volo sic jubeo* principle, and that everything gave way before him. The society in which he mixed, the hours which he kept, the opinions which he held, his likes and dislikes, his ideas of what should or should not be, were all settled by himself, not merely for himself, but for all those brought into connection with him, and it was never imagined they could be called in question. Yet he was never regarded as a tyrant: he had immense power of will, absolute mesmeric force, as he proved beneficially more than once, and that he should lead and govern seemed perfectly natural to us:

> "We who had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
> Dwelt in his mild and magnificent eye,
> Learned his great language, caught his clear accent,
> Made him our pattern to live and to die."

The first time I visited Dickens at Gadshill Place was in the summer of 1857, not long after his acquisition of that pleasant property, in response to an invitation conveyed in the following very characteristic letter:*

"Tavistock House,
Sunday, Nineteenth July, 1857.

My dear Yates,—Although I date this as above, I really write it from Southampton. I have come here on an errand which will

* The publication of the letters from Charles Dickens in this volume is authorised by his legal representative.

grow familiar to you before you know that Time has flapped his wings over your head. Like me, you will find those babies grow to be young men before you are quite sure they are born ; like me, you will have great teeth drawn with a wrench, and will only then know that you ever cut them. I am here to send Walter away over what they call in Green Bush melodramas 'the Big Drink,' and I don't at all know this day how he comes to be mine, or I his.*

I don't write to say this, or to say how, seeing Charley and him going on board the ship before me just now, I suddenly came into possession of a photograph of my own back at sixteen and twenty, and also with a suspicion that I had doubled the last age. I merely write to mention that Telbin and his wife are going down to Gad's Hill with us about midday next Sunday, and that if you and Mrs. Yates will come too, we shall be delighted to have you. We can give you a bed, and you can be in town (if you have any such savage necessity) by twenty minutes after ten on Monday morning. —Faithfully yours,

CHARLES DICKENS."

We had a most delightful day, lying out on the grass under a tree. Dickens was greatly amused at a story of Telbin's about a Scotchman at the play, who, in the ecstasy of his delight, thumped the man sitting next him ; and he himself told some capital stories of Rogers the poet, of whom he gave a ludicrous imitation.

Within the next twelve months the story of Dickens's domestic affairs was made known to the public, and he had of his own self-seeking deliberately chosen to undergo such an ordeal as is proposed to few men. It had been obvious to those visiting at Tavistock House that, for some time, the relations between host and hostess had been somewhat strained; but this state of affairs was generally ascribed to the irritability of the literary temperament on Dickens's part, and on Mrs. Dickens's side to a little love of indolence and ease, such as, however provoking to their husbands, is not uncommon among middle-aged matrons with large families. But it was never

* Lieutenant Walter Dickens died in December '63.

imagined that the affair would assume the dimensions of a public scandal.

Dickens, the master of humour and pathos, the arch-compeller of tears and laughter, was in no sense an emotional man. Very far, indeed, was he from "wearing his heart upon his sleeve," where his own affairs were concerned, though under Mr. Delane's advice he was induced to publish that most uncalled-for statement in *Household Words* regarding his separation, a step which, in the general estimation, did him more harm than the separation itself. He showed me this statement in proof, and young as I was, and fresh as was then our acquaintance, I felt so strongly, that I ventured to express my feelings as to the inadvisability of its issue. Dickens said Forster and Lemon were of the same opinion—he quarrelled with Lemon and with Messrs. Bradbury and Evans for refusing to publish the statement in *Punch*, and never, I think, spoke to any of them again—but that he himself felt most strongly that it ought to appear; that, on Forster's suggestion, he had referred the matter to Mr. Delane, and by that gentleman's decision he should abide.

There can, I take it, be no doubt that if the matter was referred to any jury composed of men ordinarily conversant with the world and society, the verdict returned would be a unanimous condemnation of the advice tendered to Dickens by Delane. The truth is that this particular episode in Dickens's career is not an appropriate one for indiscriminate investigation, and the mistake which it will be generally held Dickens made was that which is usually known as "washing dirty linen in public." Dickens had the faults, as well as the virtues, of the literary character. A man who has given to the world so many distinct creations—creations which will always have their place in English literature, and which have passed into the main currency of the English language—was full of the irritability, the sensitiveness, and the intolerance of dulness which might have been expected. If he had been wholly devoid of a certain bias in the direction of theatrical ostenta-

tion—if, in a word, his temperament had been more rigid, more severe; if he had not given such prominence in his thoughts to the link which bound him to the public whom he served so splendidly, he would not, in this particular affair, have acted as he did. The two leading personages in this little drama are dead, and I fail to see the necessity or expediency of recalling its various details. It is not for me to apportion blame or to mete out criticism. My intimacy with Dickens, his kindness to me, my devotion to him, were such that my lips are sealed and my pen is paralysed as regards circumstances which, if I felt less responsibility and less delicacy, I might be at liberty to state. As it is, I am concerned with the man, and I shall content myself with remarking that it was fortunate for him that just at this time Dickens was opening up a new field of labour. To have concentrated his mind upon the writing of a book, amid all this *Sturm und Drang*, would have been impossible; but into his public readings he could throw all his energy, and temporarily forget his troubles.

Occasional readings were given at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, in the months of May, June, and July. There was a considerable amount of anxiety among Dickens's intimate friends lest the indignation caused by the publication of the "statement," and still existing among a section of the public, might find vent on his first appearance on the platform. Arthur Smith, his manager, a timid man by nature, was especially nervous; but I do not think Dickens was made acquainted with the feelings of some of those by whom he was surrounded.

But the moment Dickens stepped on to the platform, walking rather stiffly, right shoulder well forward, as usual, bud in button-hole, and gloves in hand, all doubt was blown into the air. He was received with a roar of cheering which might have been heard at Charing Cross, and which was again and again renewed. Whatever he may have felt, Dickens showed no emotion. He took his place at his reading-desk, and made a short prefatory speech, in which he said that, though he had

read one of his books to a London audience more than once, this was the first time he had ventured to do so professionally; that he had considered the matter, and saw no reason against his doing so, either in deterioration of dignity or anything else; and that, therefore, he took his place on the platform with as much composure as he should at his own desk. Then he opened his book, and commenced.

The book was *The Cricket on the Hearth*, now read for the first time. Hitherto, Dickens had always taken the *Carol* for his readings, and I was curious and somewhat doubtful as to the effect of the new book on an audience. The *Carol* is, so to speak, more *Christmassy:* the descriptions of outdoor scenery and of domestic doings, at what time-honoured custom leads us to call in after-dinner speeches that "festive season of the year," cannot fail in making an immediate and palpable impression; the rough hearty geniality, smacking of frost and firelight, of crackling logs and sputtering chestnuts, and steaming punch and sparkling wine, that pervades every page, is irresistible in its influence: reading, or, better still, listening to it, we rub our hands and shrug our shoulders involuntarily. To take up the book in the hot weather would be ridiculous, for the mind is so imbued with the word-painting that sunlight is an insult to the understanding, and dust and verdure are simply delusions and snares. The characters, moreover, are essentially typical of London life: we have all done business with Scrooge, played at forfeits at his nephew's house, stood "best man" to Topper on the occasion of his wedding with the plump sister with the lace tucker, peeped into Fezziwig's warehouse, seen Old Joe smoking his pipe at the door of the Clerkenwell marine-store, been waited upon by the benevolent merchant with his subscription list; and from how many Camden Town and Dalston chimneys has not the goose-stuffing-tainted smoke of Bob Cratchit's fire gone curling into the crisp and glorious air?

In some of these attributes the *Cricket* is most deficient. It is essentially a tale of rustic and domestic life, passing in that

class of society which a cant phrase has so generously stigmatised as the "lower orders;" and it is dependent for its success on the concentration and elaboration of an interest which, originally powerfully conceived, is worked out with masterly skill, and arrests the attention rather by the faithful and gradual development of character than by the observation and photography of every-day scenes and objects.

There was, however, no doubt of its interest and attraction to the audience present—ordinary upper and lower middle-class people, amongst whom the Dickens books find their most numerous and most enthusiastic readers. From first to last they sat in rapt suspense, broken only by outbursts of laughter and applause; and at the conclusion the vehement cheering was renewed. The success of the readings was assured.

At the end of July, Dickens, accompanied by Arthur Smith, started on a provincial tour, commencing at Clifton on the 2nd August. On the 4th August he wrote me from Plymouth:

"We had a most noble night at Exeter last night, and turned numbers away. Arthur is something between a Home Secretary and a furniture-dealer in Rathbone Place. He is either always corresponding in the genteelest manner, or dragging rout-seats about without his coat."

And again, in a letter dated from the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, 21st August, he says:

"A wonderful house here last night, and the largest in money we have ever had, including St. Martin's Hall. There were 2,300 people and 200 guineas. The very books were all sold out early in the evening; and Arthur, bathed in checks, took headers into tickets, floated on billows of passes, dived under weirs of shillings, staggered home faint with gold and silver."

Thenceforward all was plain sailing. Those "pecular relations (personally affectionate, and like no other man's) which subsist between me and the public," of which Dickens had spoken in his capacity as author, stood him in good stead in

his new venture. He was received everywhere with the greatest personal affection and respect, and his receipts were enormous.

Within a year Tavistock House was sold, and Dickens took up his permanent residence at Gadshill. A stout, red-faced, comfortable, old-fashioned family house, with a wide porch and a bell-tower, which always associated it in my mind with the Warren at Chigwell, but standing in a broad garden easily overlooked from the road, and with an occasionally noisy country tavern within eye and earshot, Gadshill Place was not, according to a common phrase, "every one's money." But Dickens had associations with it, and gave associations to it, and also practically improved the property by judicious outlay. A generous man, he also was always a man of business; liberal with his money, he always meant having his money's worth.

Life at Gadshill for visitors, I speak from experience, was delightful. You breakfasted at nine, smoked your cigar, read the papers, and pottered about the garden until luncheon at one. All the morning Dickens was at work, either in the study—a room on the right hand of the porch as you entered: a large room, entirely lined with books, and with a fine bay-window, in which the desk was placed*—or in the Châlet, a Swiss house of four rooms, presented to him by Fechter, which took to pieces, and was erected in a shrubbery on the side of the road opposite to the house, where he had a fine view extending to the river. In the Châlet he did his last work, on the fatal 8th June, using a writing-slope which, by the kindness of Miss Hogarth, is now mine, and on which I write these words.

After luncheon (a substantial meal, though Dickens generally took little but bread and cheese and a glass of ale) the party would assemble in the hall, which was hung round with

* Originally the "Bachelor Bedroom," and under that title most humorously described, with its various tenants, by Wilkie Collins in *Household Words*.

a capital set of Hogarth prints, now in my possession, and settle on their plans. Some walked, some drove, some pottered; there was Rochester Cathedral to be visited, the ruins of the Castle to be explored, Cobham Park (keys for which had been granted by Lord Darnley) in all its sylvan beauty within easy distance. I, of course, elected to walk with Dickens; and off we set, with such of the other guests as chose to face the ordeal. They were not many, and they seldom came twice; for the distance traversed was seldom less than twelve miles, and the pace was good throughout. I have now in my mind's eye a portly American gentleman in varnished boots, who started with us full of courage, but whom we left panting by the wayside, and for whom the basket-carriage had to be sent.

It was during one of these walks that Dickens showed me, in Cobham Park, the stile close by which, after a fearful struggle, Mr. Dadd had been murdered by his lunatic son in 1843. Dickens acted the whole scene with his usual dramatic force. I had heard something of the story before from Frith, who is an excellent *raconteur*. The murderer then escaped, but was afterwards secured: he had been travelling on a coach, and his homicidal tendencies had been aroused by regarding the large neck, disclosed by a very low collar, of a fellow-passenger, who, waking from a sleep, found Dadd's fingers playing round his throat. On searching Dadd's studio, after his arrest, they found, painted on the wall behind a screen, portraits of Egg, Stone, and Frith, Dadd's intimate associates, *all with their throats cut*—a pleasant suggestion of their friend's intentions.

Generally accompanied by his dogs (when I was first with him they were Turk, a liver-coloured mastiff, and Linda, a St. Bernard, which Albert Smith had brought from Switzerland), Dickens would go along at a swinging pace: sometimes over the marshes famous in *Great Expectations;* sometimes along a hilly tramp-infested road to Gravesend, skirting Cobham Park, and past the "Leather Bottle," whither Mr. Tupman retired;

past Fort Pitt, near which Dr. Slammer proposed to take Mr. Winkle's life; down miry lanes and over vast stubble-fields, to outlying little churches, and frequently to a quaint old almshouse standing, I cannot remember where, in a green courtyard, like an Oxford "quad."

They were stiff walks for anyone not in full training, as Dickens always was at that time, but to me they never seemed long or fatiguing, beguiled as the time was by his most charming talk. With small difficulty, if the subject were deftly introduced, he could be induced to talk about his books, to tell how and why certain ideas occurred to him, and how he got such and such a scene or character. Generally his excellent memory accurately retained his own phrases and actual words, so that he would at once correct a misquotation; but on more than one occasion I have, in conversation with him, purposely misquoted from one of his books, in order that he might set me right. Who, indeed, would not be suspected, justly or unjustly, of misquotation, if he could be set right in a letter so overbrimming with delicious fun as the following?—

"Your quotation is, as I supposed, all wrong. The text is NOT 'which his owls was organs.'

When Mr. Harris went 'into a empty dog-kennel' to spare his sensitive nature the anguish of overhearing Mrs. Harris's exclamation on the occasion of the birth of her first child (the Princess Royal of the Harris family), 'he never took his hands away from his ears or come out once till he was shown the baby.' On encountering that spectacle, he was, (being of a weakly constitution) 'took with fits.' For this distressing complaint he was medically treated: the doctor 'collared him, and laid him down on his back upon the airy stones'—please to observe what follows—'and she was told, to ease her mind, his 'owls was organs.'

That is to say: Mrs. Harris, lying in her bed, hears a noise, apparently proceeding from the back-yard, and says, in a flushed and hysterical manner, 'What 'owls are those? Who is a-'owling? Not my 'ugeband?' Upon which the doctor, looking round one of the bottom posts of the bed, and taking Mrs. Harris's pulse in a reassuring manner, says with admirable presence of mind, 'Howls,

my dear madam? No, no, no,—what are we thinking of? Howls, my dear Mrs. Harris? Ha, ha, ha! Organs, ma'am, organs—organs in the street, Mrs. Harris. No howls!'"

While on this subject, I may say that many of Dickens's private letters read like excerpts from his published works. Here is one, for instance. My old friend Mr. Thomas Archer pressed me to ask Dickens to take the chair at a dinner on behalf of the Orthopœdic Hospital. Here is Dickens's reply:

"I send you an Orthopœdic shield to defend your manly bosom from the pens of the enemy. For a good many years I have suffered a great deal from charities, but never anything like what I suffer now. The amount of correspondence they inflict upon me is really incredible. But this is nothing. Benevolent men get behind the piers of the gates, lying in wait for my going out; and when I peep shrinkingly from my study window I see their pot-bellied shadows projected on the gravel. Benevolent bullies drive up in hansom cabs, with engraved portraits of their benevolent institutions hanging over their aprons like banners on their outward walls. Benevolent area sneaks get lost in the kitchen, and are found to impede the circulation of the knife-cleaning machine. My man has been heard to say 'that if it was a wicious place, well and good —*that* ain't door work; but that when all the Christian virtues is always a-shouldering and a-helbering on you in the 'all, a-trying to get past you and cut up into master's room, why, no wages as you couldn't name would make it up to you.'—Persecuted ever,

C. D."

From Paris, in September '65, he writes:

"The heat has been excessive on this side of the Channel, and I got a slight sunstroke last Thursday, and was obliged to be doctored and put to bed for a day. But, thank God, I am all right again. The man who sells the *tisane* on the boulevards can't keep the flies out of his glasses, and as he wears them on his red velvet bands, the flies work themselves into the ends of the tumblers, trying to get through and tickle the man. If fly-life were long enough, I think they would at last. Three paving blouses came to work at the corner of this street last Monday, pulled up a bit of the road, sat down and looked at it, and fell asleep. On Tuesday one of the blouses spat on his hands, and seemed going to begin, but didn't.

The other two have shown no sign of life whatever. This morning the industrious one ate a loaf. You may rely upon this as the latest news from the French capital."

Dickens took great interest in theatrical affairs, and was very fond of theatrical society. He had a lifelong affection for Macready, and a great regard for Regnier and Fechter; of the latter he said once to me, "He has the brain of a man, combined with that strange power of arriving, without knowing how or why, at the truth, which one usually finds only in a woman." He had also a liking for Phelps, Buckstone, Webster, Madame Celeste, and the Keeleys. He saw most of the pieces which were produced from time to time, but he delighted in the *ir* regular drama, the shows and booths and circuses.

One day—a Queen's birthday, on which I had a holiday from my office—we had spent together at Gadshill. The family were absent, and the house was in charge of the gardener, whose wife cooked us a steak, and Dickens had taken care to bring the cellar-key with him. We rambled about during the afternoon, and at night we went to the Rochester Theatre. I forget the play; indeed, I recollect nothing but the presence of mind of a large man in a green baize tunic and a pair of buff boots, who, to Dickens's joy, evidently did not know a word of his part. He strode into the middle of the stage without uttering a syllable, looked fiercely round, then said in stentorian tones, "I will r-r-re-tur-r-n anon!" and walked quietly off to read up his part at the "wing."

We returned to town that night, and Dickens, who had a theory that no one ever liked it to be thought that he or she could sleep in public, fell into a doze in the train. When he woke I said to him, "You've been asleep, sir!" He looked guilty, and said, "I have, sir! and I suppose you're going to tell me that *you* 'haven't closed an eye!'"

On the very last outing which we had together, about two months before his death, we went to a circus, where we saw a highly-trained elephant standing on its head, dancing and

performing tricks. Dickens was greatly pleased. "I've never seen anything better!" he said; "it's wonderful how they teach them to do all this!" Then a moment after his eyes flashed with that peculiar light which always betokened the working of some funny notion of his brain, and he said, "They've never taught the rhinoceros to do anything; and I don't think they could, *unless it were to collect the water-rate, or something equally unpleasant!*"

There was another "show" experience of mine, which Dickens was never tired of hearing me relate. Many years ago, one dusty summer's night, I turned into the Strand Theatre, where were being exhibited the Bosjesmen, some wretched African savages, at a charge of a shilling to the boxes, sixpence to the pit, and threepence to the gallery. I went into the pit. After the miserable creatures had gone through a dance, their showman, a gentleman in black, with beautifully-arranged hair, advanced to give a description of them. "The little man," he commenced in mellifluous accents, "is forty-two years old!" He paused for an instant, and a ribald boy in the threepenny gallery called out, "And how old are *you?*" The showman started, struck an attitude, and with outstretched hand exclaimed, "Old enough to tell you, sir, that you are no gentleman!"

As an editor Dickens was most painstaking and conscientious: outside contributors, whose articles had passed the first critical ordeal of Mr. Wills's judgment, and had been referred to "the Chief," received thoroughly impartial attention from him, while for his friends he could not take too much trouble or show too much interest. As an illustration of this, take the following letter, written after reading in MS. a story submitted in '57:

"I retain the story with pleasure, and I need not tell you that you are not mistaken in the last lines of your note.

Excuse me on that ground if I say a word or two as to what I think (I mention it with a view to the future) might be better in the paper. The opening is excellent, but it passes too completely into

the Irishman's narrative,—does not light it up with the life about it, or the circumstances under which it is delivered, and does not carry through it, as I think it should with a certain indefinable subtlety, the thread with which you begin your weaving. I will tell Wills to send me the proof, and will try and show you what I mean, when I have gone over it carefully."

Again:

"The mail-journey very good; perhaps a little diffuse here and there—in the railway-carriage and on board the steamer; but I will run my pen through such portions in the proof."

He was a ruthless "cutter," and the very last time I saw him at the office he laughed immensely, as I said, when I noticed him run his blue-ink pen through about half a column of the proof before him, "Poor gentleman! there's fifteen shillings lost to him for ever!"*

Dickens was by far the best after-dinner speaker I have ever heard. Mr. Sala, Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Parkinson, Lord Houghton, and Mr. Henry Irving are good, but Dickens was above them all. For years I scarcely missed an opportunity of hearing him speak in public. The first time I ever heard him was on a Shakespeare birthday at the Garrick Club, when he was in the chair, and made an elaborate speech, naming the day as the birthday of all the wondrous characters of Shakespeare's creation, specially, I remember, mentioning Falstaff as the "hugest, merriest, wittiest creature that never lived." The last time I heard him was two months before his death, at the dinner for the benefit of the Newsvendors' Fund, a favourite institution of his, when he again alluded to Falstaff —"Trying," he said, "like Falstaff, but with a modification almost as large as himself, less to speak himself than to be the cause of speaking in others."

* I suppose that in their close attention to his suggestions his regular disciples become unconscious imitators of his style. In Mr. J. C. Hotten's *Life*, and in Mr. A. W. Ward's admirable monograph in the "English Men of Letters" series, a paper of mine called "Pincher Astray" is attributed to Dickens.

In connection with this subject I am reminded of Dickens's wonderful readiness. I was so much in the habit of going with him to public dinners, and the managers of those entertainments so frequently begged me to propose his health as chairman, that it became a joke between us as to whether I could possibly find anything new to say. On one occasion—it was at one of the Newsvendors' dinners—I said nothing at all! I duly rose, but, after a few words, my thoughts entirely deserted me, I entirely lost the thread of what I had intended saying, I felt as though a black veil were dropped over my head; all I could do was to mutter "health," "chairman," and to sit down. I was tolerably well known to the guests at those dinners, and they were evidently much astonished. They cheered the toast, as in duty bound, and Dickens was on his feet in a moment. "Often," he said—"often as I have had the pleasure of having my health proposed by my friend, who has just sat down, I have never yet seen him so overcome by his affection and generous emotion as on the present occasion." These words turned what would have been a fiasco into a triumph. "I saved you that time, I think, sir!" he said to me as I walked away with him. "Serves you well right for being over-confident!"

I do not think I ever heard him to less advantage than on an occasion when most was expected of him, at the farewell banquet given to him at the Freemasons' Tavern, on the 2nd November, 1867, just before his last visit to America. For that affair Charles Kent, Edward Levy (Lawson), and I were the joint secretaries, and we worked night and day to make it the success which it proved. The applications for tickets were innumerable, and hundreds had to be disappointed. Just as all were taking their places, Edward Levy came to me and said, "We must find a better place for Matthew Arnold! He is right away at the far end." We went together and induced the great poet-critic to change his seat. "Who is that very polite gentleman?" asked Mr. Arnold of me as we walked up the room. "Mr. Edward Levy." "What—of the

Daily Telegraph?" "Yes," I replied; "the keeper of the 'young lions.'"

Lord Lytton presided over this dinner, and, due allowance being made for his high-falutin matter and manner, spoke well; but the best speech of the night was made by Sir Alexander Cockburn.

In the following week I accompanied Dickens and his daughters, Wilkie Collins, Arthur Chappell, and Charles Kent, to Liverpool, whence he sailed next day in the *Cuba*, which, five years later, took me to New York. Leave-taking, as is always the case, was difficult; we had inspected Dickens's cabin, looked round the ship, and were uncomfortably uttering commonplaces, when the knot was cut by Dickens suddenly turning to me, as standing nearest to him, and saying, "It must be done!"—then in his heartiest tone, and with his warmest hand-grip, "God bless you, old fellow!"

Some months previously he had given me a great proof of his affection and esteem. I had heard from Mr. Stanford, the geographical publisher, that the directors of a certain well-known and excellent society were about to establish a secular weekly periodical, somewhat on the *Household Words* basis, and that they were looking out for an editor. I immediately made up my mind to apply for the post, and wrote to two or three friends for testimonials of my fitness for it. This is what Dickens sent me in reply:

"I am exceedingly sorry that I should happen to be away reading, and therefore unable to help you in your presentation of yourself to the Committee of the ——. But I fear I may not be in London for more than twenty-four hours together until May is nearly out.

You cannot overstate my recommendation of you for the editorship described in the advertisement; nor can you easily exaggerate the thorough knowledge of your qualifications on which such recommendation is founded. A man even of your quickness and ready knowledge would be useless in such an office unless he added to his natural and acquired parts habits of business, punctuality, steadiness, and zeal. I so thoroughly rely on you in

all these respects, and I have had so much experience of you in connection with them, that perhaps the Committee may deem my testimony in your behalf of some unusual worth.

In any way you think best make it known to them, and in every way rely on my help, if you can show me further how to help you.

With hearty good wishes, ever yours,

C. D." *

That letter is a specimen of the heartiness and thoroughness which characterized every action of Dickens's life. From the writing of a book, "out of which I have come," he said in a letter to Lady Blessington, "looking like a murderer," to a game of rounders in the Gadshill field, to dancing a Scotch reel or leading "Sir Roger de Coverley," to organizing a party for playing "Spanish merchant" or "buzz," to brewing and baking a jug of gin-punch—whatever he did was done with all his heart and soul.

I had a letter from Dickens from Gadshill, dated 10th May, 1868, announcing his return from America, and proposing a meeting on my return from the country, where I then was. "You may suppose what arrears of business of all kinds I have," he says, "and how they are complicated by Wills's illness and absence." We met soon after. He still retained the sun-browning which he had gained on the homeward voyage, and looked better than I had anticipated after his work and illness in America.

I saw but little of him during that year, which was one, to

* I must tell the conclusion of this story. The Committee selected me and one other—a gentleman afterwards well known at the criminal Bar, who is no longer living—from the crowd of applicants. They then asked me if I were prepared to give them my whole time and attention, which of course meant giving up the Post Office. I therefore let them know that I could not relinquish my existing vocation, with which a proper discharge of the duties required by them would not interfere. So they appointed my rival, but immediately afterwards discovered that he was a Presbyterian, and therefore ineligible. The matter ended by their paying him a year's salary, and leaving the question of starting the magazine in indefinite abeyance.

me, of considerable anxiety, and during greater part of which I lived out of London. In the spring of the following year, '69, I was devoting some of my annual leave of absence from the Post Office to the purposes of a little lecturing tour. Finding that on Monday, the 12th of April, I was due at Leeds, and seeing from Dickens's memorandum of reading engagements, with which he furnished me, that he was going to read there, in the same hall, on the following night, I wrote asking whether we should meet. He replied, proposing we should sup together on the Monday night, after my work.

Accordingly, on my return to the Queen's Hotel, I found Dickens and Mr. Dolby, who was then his business manager. Dickens was lying on a sofa—he had relieved himself of one of his boots, and the foot was swathed in lotion bandages. This was the recurrence of a trouble from which he had suffered for some time, and of which I was cognisant, but I was not prepared for the change in his appearance and manner. He looked desperately aged and worn; the lines in his cheeks and round the eyes, always noticeable, were now deep furrows; there was a weariness in his gaze, and a general air of fatigue and depression about him.

He tried to rouse, told me of the public dinner at Liverpool at which he had been entertained on the previous Saturday, under the presidency of Lord Dufferin, laughingly alluded to a passage of words he had had with Lord Houghton, and praised a speech made by Sala. Then he inquired about the acoustic properties of the hall in which I had just lectured, and where he was to read the next night, and gave certain orders for the arrangement of curtains there. But that extraordinary elasticity of spirits, his great characteristic, seemed to have vanished; he was evidently wearied and in much pain, and went early to bed.

The next morning at breakfast he seemed much better, and his ordinary cheerfulness had returned. I had to go on to Sheffield amid pouring rain, and Dickens congratulated me on the outlook. "It was just the kind of day," said he, "on which

the loveliness of the locality would be seen to the highest advantage." We parted, and within a week he was stricken down at Preston; had to telegraph for his medical attendant, Mr. Beard, under whose advice, and that of Sir Thomas Watson, the readings were entirely suspended for a time.

This was on the 22nd April. On the 26th May, in a letter to Earl Russell, Dickens is "happy to report myself quite well again." There is no doubt, however, that his health was by this time wholly undermined, and that the attack at Preston was, as his sister-in-law phrased it, "the beginning of the end."

It is curious to notice what a hatred he had to any public reference to the state of his health; it amounted almost to a mania. On the 3rd September, 1867, Dickens wrote the following jocose certificate to Mr. F. D. Finlay, who had sent him some newspaper paragraph announcing his illness:

"This is to certify that the undersigned victim of a periodical paragraph-disease, which usually breaks out once in every seven years (proceeding from England by the overland route to India and by the Cunard line to America, where it strikes the base of the Rocky Mountains, and, rebounding to Europe, perishes on the steppes of Russia), is *not* 'in a critical state of health,' and has *not* 'consulted eminent surgeons,' and was never better in his life, and is *not* recommended to proceed to the United States 'for cessation from literary labour,' and has not had so much as a headache for twenty years.

CHARLES DICKENS."

This is funny, but by no means strictly accurate. Eighteen months before, at the end of February '66, Dickens had written to Forster: "For some time I have been very unwell. F. B. [Frank Beard] wrote me word that, with such a pulse as I described, an examination of the heart was absolutely necessary. 'Want of muscular power in the heart,' B. said."

Six months before, on the 19th February '67, he wrote to his sister-in-law: "Yesterday I was so unwell with an internal malady which occasionally, at long intervals, troubles me a little, and it was attended with the sudden loss of so much

blood, that I wrote to F. B., from whom I shall doubtless hear to-morrow."

Less than one month before, on the 6th August '67, he writes to Forster: "I am laid up with another attack in my foot, and was on the sofa all night in tortures. I cannot bear to have the fomentation off for a moment. I was so ill with it on Sunday, and it looked so fierce, that I came up to Henry Thompson. . . . Meantime I am on my back and chafing."

There is no one now, I suppose, who does not recognise that this pain in the foot and lameness were gouty expressions of internal disorder. Sir Henry Thompson saw this at the time, and said so. But Dickens hated the idea of having the gout, and, in his old autocratic way, refused to have it, and declared he could not have it. "I make out so many reasons against supposing it to be gouty, that I really do not think it is." And, with his powers of persuasion, he seems to have brought Mr. Syme, an eminent surgeon of Edinburgh, to his views, and got him to declare the disorder to be "an affection of the delicate nerves and muscles, originating in cold." But Sir Henry Thompson was not to be thus pleasantly cajoled.

Never did man wishing to deceive himself carry out his object so thoroughly as Dickens. One can see the shoulder-shrug and the eyebrow-raising with which he would have received the information told of anyone else. He has pain, inflammation, every possible gouty symptom in his foot, the chosen locality for gout, but it is *not* gout, it is something originating in cold. The same symptoms appear in the other foot—still not gout. As he walks along the streets one day, he can read only the halves of the letters over the shop-doors that were on his right as he looked. "He attributed it to medicine," says Forster. It is really almost too astonishing.

Dickens came up to London, renting Mr. Milner Gibson's house, 5 Hyde Park Place, almost immediately opposite the Marble Arch, in January 1870, for the purpose of giving his last series of readings. We dined together two or three times, at the Cock in Fleet Street, where, I suppose, I have been

with him a score of times, and at the Albion in Drury Lane, in his favourite box round the corner, away from most of the visitors. I also dined at his house, and was at a large reception where many well-known people were present.

On the 11th March, when Dickens gave his final reading, and "vanished from those garish lights for ever," I was with Mr. Scudamore at Edinburgh, whence, from the "instrument-room" of the General Post Office, I sent Dickens an affectionate message, which was given to him just before he stepped on to the platform, and to which he returned an affectionate reply.

On my return to London we met again, going that circus expedition before mentioned. Another meeting was arranged, but was postponed by the following letter:

"5, Hyde Park Place, W.
Monday, Sixteenth May, 1870.

My dear E. Y.,—Let us have our little out next month, after I have struck this tent. My foot has collared me again, and has given me great pain: I have not the use of it now.—Ever,

C. D."

We never had that "little out"! I never saw him again! He was to have taken his daughter to the Queen's Ball on the 17th, but was too ill; he cancelled all his dinner engagements, and between that date and the end of the month, when he returned to Gadshill, only dined out once, at Lord Houghton's, to meet the Prince of Wales and the King of the Belgians.

But I heard from him once more. I consulted him on a business matter, and received a reply, with an enclosure, dated three days before his fatal seizure. And as the one shows his keen business insight, and the other his warm desire to serve his friends, I give both:

"Gadshill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent,*
Sunday, Fifth June, 1870.

My dear Edmund,—I enclose you a letter to Fields's House. You address them as Publishers, Boston, Mass., U.S. of America.

* "Why do you have 'Kent' on your notepaper, sir?" I asked him. "Post-office sorters always look for the name of the post-town, and

There is this difficulty in the way. They republish from early proofs in a weekly magazine of their own, called *Every Saturday*. In the case of *Edwin Drood*, their republication in those pages (tried with a serial, I think, for the first time), to their own best advantage, would have anticipated, as to certain portions, the publication in England; and consequently, *as to those portions*, would have destroyed the English copyright. This I was obliged to point out to them, and forbid. As they had not anticipated the objection, they *may* find the speculation generally not worth their money. But I merely mention this to you for your private preparation, and take no notice to them.

Ever yours,
C. D."

[*Enclosure.*]

"TO MESSRS. FIELDS, OSGOOD, & CO.

My dear Sirs,—My particular friend Mr. Edmund Yates has asked me if I will give him a letter of introduction to you, advancing —if I can—his desire of disposing of early proofs for publication in America of a new serial novel he is writing, called *Nobody's Fortune*.

Mr. Yates is the most punctual and reliable of men in the execution of his work. I have had the plan of his story before me, and have advised him upon it, and have no doubt of its being of great promise, and turning upon a capital set of incidents. It has not been offered in America as yet, I am assured.*

Faithfully yours always,
CHARLES DICKENS."

Dickens was struck down by apoplexy—a condition which Sir Thomas Watson, on examination fourteen months before, had foreseen—on the 8th of June, and expired twenty-four hours later.

"The state thus described," says Sir Thomas Watson after the consultation in April '69, "showed plainly that C. D. had

'Rochester' is quite enough." "Because, sir, there might be two Rochesters, and because some people write so badly it might be mistaken for something else!" His delight may be guessed when one day a letter of mine to him was missent to *Dor*chester.

* The early proofs were purchased by Messrs. Fields, Osgood, & Co., and the story was published by them in *Every Saturday*.

been on the brink of an attack of paralysis of his left side, and possibly of apoplexy. *It was, no doubt, the result of extreme hurry, overwork, and excitement, incidental to his readings.*"

There is the wise physician's opinion in his own words; and surely on reading it one is almost justified in saying that Dickens's death lay at his own door; that to a very great extent it was no doubt hastened, if not caused, by his extraordinary persistence in self-sacrifice. It is impossible for me to believe that he did not comprehend what he was doing, and what result all that he did was tending to bring about. What would he have thought, what would he have said, of any other man who could only read half of the letters of the names over the shop-doors, who "found himself extremely giddy and extremely uncertain of the sense of touch, both in the left leg and the left hand and arm," and who ascribed those symptoms to "the effect of medicine"? With what caustic touches would he have described a man who, suffering under all those symptoms, and under many others equally significant, harassed, worn out, yet travels and reads and works until he falls dead on the roadside!

And, it will be asked by the generations to come—or, indeed, by the present generation; for one is apt to forget that more than fifteen years have passed since Dickens died—for what purpose, to what end, were these fatal labours undertaken, these desperate exertions made?

Not the acquisition of fame. For thirty years Charles Dickens had enjoyed the utmost renown that literary genius could possibly earn. His books were read, his name was loved and honoured, wherever the English language was spoken. His Sovereign had sent for him to visit her, and working men, passing along the streets and recognising him by his photograph, would pull off their hats and give him kindly greeting. The sentiments of the entire civilized world find expression in the lady who stopped him in the streets of York, and said, "Mr. Dickens, will you let me touch the hand that has filled my house with many friends?"—in the warm-hearted Irishman,

who ran after him as he hurried to the Belfast hotel, and asked him to "Do me the honour to shake hands, Mr. Dickens; and God bless you, sir, not only for the light you've been to me this night, but for the light you've been in my house, sir (and God love your face!), this many a year!" To what mortal man has been meted out fame and honour and personal affectionate regard in greater measure than this?

Not for the acquisition of money; at least one would think not, when one learns from Mr. Forster that Dickens's real and personal estates amounted, as nearly as may be calculated, to 93,000*l.*!

Of this, 20,000*l.* were made in America, and the odd 13,000*l.* derived from the sale of his house, pictures, etc.; so that we may take it he was worth, before his visit to America, some 60,000*l.* This, in round numbers, would bring in 2,500*l.* a year; his periodical must have been worth another 2,500*l.*; while a new book must have earned him something like 10,000*l.**

With such an income and an expenditure which was generous but not lavish, there was, so far as an outsider could see, every means for providing comfort and luxury, no occasion for alarm even when the bread-winner should have ceased to exist; certainly no occasion for the daily and nightly labour, the constant travel, the superhuman exertions, the frightful wear and tear which brought his existence to a premature close.

Though I have raised the question, I believe the answer to be comparatively simple and the explanation commonplace. It may be that if Dickens had not exerted himself—had not, to use a common expression, taken so much out of himself—as he did during the last few years of his life, he might, at the

* The price paid down by Mr. Chapman for *Edwin Drood*, calculated on a sale of 25,000 copies, was 7,500*l.*, publisher and author sharing equally in the profit of all sales beyond that impression; and the number reached, while the author yet lived, was 50,000. Messrs. Fields and Osgood paid 1,000*l.* for the early sheets for America, and, in addition, there was Baron Tauchnitz's cheque, amount unknown, but sure to be liberal, for his Leipzig edition.

present moment, have been a hale and hearty man—indeed, a young man, as youth is judged nowadays—of seventy-three years. But the conditions of existence are prescribed by that constitutional fatalism known as temperament. Dickens was not only a genius, but he had the volcanic activity, the perturbed restlessness, the feverish excitability of genius. What he created that he was. His personages were, as readers of his letters know, an integral part of his life.

Nor were the enthusiasm and intensity which he experienced in his daily business less remarkable. The meditative life, the faculty of a judicious resting, the power of self-detachment from contemporary events which enables so many of our octogenarians to be comparatively juvenile, had no charm for him. To him old age would never have brought tranquillity, and therefore it may be said that old age would never have arrived. It was a law of his existence that his foot should be always in the stirrup and his sword always unsheathed. He had, moreover, as I have above explained, a chivalrous regard to the public. He was their devoted servant, and he was anxious to spend his life-blood in their cause. Consequently, even when he knew his power as a novelist was on the wane—according to Forster it had, indeed, been on the wane so far back as the days of *Bleak House*—he determined to seek a new sphere, and one which to his histrionic temperament was singularly congenial, in his readings. This I believe to be the true account of the reasons which weighed with him in selecting that arduous ordeal which brought his life to its premature close. Other reasons of a more melodramatic and sensational character might be cited, but it is my conviction that they would be less to be trusted.

One word more. In regard to the friendship which Dickens vouchsafed me, I have been frequently asked, "Did he come up to the expectations you had formed of him? Was Dickens the man as lovable as Dickens the author?" And I have always replied, "Yes; wholly."

All the kindness of heart, geniality, generosity, appreciation of whatever could be appreciated in others, manly independence, hatred of humbug, all the leading qualities of his books were component parts of his nature. For one holding a position so unique in the world he was wonderfully modest; and while he always quietly and unostentatiously asserted his own dignity, I never saw the smallest appearance of "putting on airs." His expressed dislike to allow his daughters to play before the Court as amateur actresses, his repeated refusal of the Queen's requests that he would come round after an amateur performance and be presented to her, he being in his theatrical costume, were evidences of this self-respect; and his belief in, and assertion of, the dignity of his calling were just as marked. Any foothold on the literary ladder, no matter how low, had its interest for him. "I do not plead as a stranger," he said at the Newspaper Press Fund; "I hold a brief for my brothers;" and then plunged into some delightful stories of his reporting days.

What he was to the world the world knows; to me he was the most charming of companions, the kindest of friends.

"I weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed;
And where warm hands have pressed and closed
Silence, till I be silent too.

I weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A spirit, not a breathing voice."

CHAPTER XII.

PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN.

I HAD the honour of an acquaintance with the late Lord Chief Justice of England, SIR ALEXANDER COCKBURN, which extended over some years, and was to me the source of much pleasure. A better talker with a sweeter voice cannot be imagined: matter and manner were both excellent. He had lived so long, so much, and with such people, that his experiences were as unique as the way in which he told them.

I first met him at Lady Fife's in Cavendish Square, in the year '67, to my great delight—for I had heard much of him from Dickens, and had long admired him from a distance. The next week I dined with him at his house in Hertford Street, with a small party. His dinners were excellent, though not elaborate, and be the rest of the *menu* what it might, a joint of cold roast beef always prominently figured therein; he drank little wine himself, but gave much and good to his friends, and as a host he shone pre-eminent. As Mr. Disraeli said in the course of his notable reply to Dr. Kenealy in the House of Commons, "The Lord Chief Justice is not a man who enters our drawing-rooms with an air of Rhadamanthine gravity." Nor did he assume such an air as he sat at the head of his own table, the model of a host in his mien and bearing, with all the vivacity of youth tempered by the wisdom of age.

When the other guests left, Sir Alexander, to my delight,

invited me to remain for a cigar and a chat. We adjourned to the library, a cosy room lined with books on all sides from floor to ceiling, where his homework was done. I took occasion to refer to the great Palmer trial, where he had conducted the prosecution, and of which I knew from Dickens he had most interesting anecdotes. My allusion had the desired effect, and my host started off at once.

I listened to his wonderful story of the case, from its commencement to its close: how he, then Attorney-General, read the notes of the proceedings and of the earlier examinations, and became convinced not merely of Palmer's guilt, but of the manner in which the crime was carried out; how he worked night and day in studying the effects of various poisons, and finally submitted himself to an examination by friendly experts to prove that he had mastered the subject; how he elected to have the prisoner tried on Cook's case, though it was the weakest of the several indictments which he could have brought forward, feeling certain that if he failed to hang Palmer for the murder of Cook he would indubitably convict him for the murder of his wife. I remember his telling me how, having been called away by his duties as Attorney-General to Westminster, he returned to the Old Bailey as Lord Campbell was summing up, and looking down from a gallery into the court, "I knew," said he, "by the look of John Campbell's face, that Palmer was a dead man."

It was in connection with the Palmer trial that he told me he experienced what he considered the greatest compliment ever paid to him. Palmer was in the habit, as he stood in the dock, of writing instructions or suggestions to his attorney, Mr. Smith, screwing them up into little pellets, and tossing them over to their destination. One of these, which he wrote immediately after the verdict of guilty had been pronounced by the jury, was afterwards handed to Sir Alexander Cockburn. It merely contained these words: "It's the riding that has done it;" conveying thereby, in sporting metaphor, which Palmer was constantly using, the prisoner's opinion that it was solely due to the

Attorney-General's conduct of the case that the verdict against him had been obtained.

One more anecdote in connection with this subject is in my mind. "I remember," said Cockburn, leaning back in his chair and laughing, "an article which appeared in one of the picture-papers—not the *Illustrated London News*, I fancy, but another —which gave portraits and personal descriptions of all engaged in the trial—judges, counsel, prisoners, and all. The portraits were, as usual, not to be recognised, but the letterpress was exceedingly impudent and very amusing. Some of the phrases were excellent. ——* was spoken of, I recollect, as 'the buck of the Bar,' a term which fitted him exactly. I never knew who wrote it." "Permit me," said I, rising, and pointing to myself with a low bow, "to introduce you to that distinguished journalist!"†

One night, after a *tête-à-tête* dinner in Hertford Street, I had the pleasure of accompanying Sir Alexander to one of Dickens's readings. The subjects were the *Christmas Carol* and "The Trial from *Pickwick*." With the first Cockburn was heartily delighted, laughing and—almost—crying; but the delivery of the trial affected him very differently. He pish'd and psha'd throughout; he was, I think, annoyed at being recognised and stared at by people who wanted to see how he took the points, and particularly the imitation of the judge; and at the conclusion he stigmatised the performance as "perfectly ridiculous, a mere broad farce or exaggerated pantomime."

I have a note of another delightful dinner with the Lord Chief some years later, in May '75, when were present Lord Kenmare, Lord Elcho, Lord Camoys, the Spanish Ambassador, Sir Henry Pelly, Mr. Delane, Mr. Hayward, Mr. Benjamin, Q.C., Mr. Waddy, Q.C., and Captain Cockburn. On this occasion I was again happily detained by Sir Alexander till 1 A.M., part of

* Now a judge.

† The reference was to some "graphic" sketches of events and occurrences at the Palmer trial, which in my early days I had written for the *Illustrated Times*.

his most interesting talk being devoted to a life-history of Edwin James.* We also talked of my old schoolfellow Richard Bethell, second Lord Westbury, who was just dead, and of his father, the first lord, the Lord Chancellor, of whom Cockburn told several excellent stories, among them the following:

Sir Richard Bethell, being Solicitor-General, and Sir Alexander Cockburn, being Attorney-General, had occasion to discuss some important legal reform which was to be brought before Parliament; and the former suggested that it should be talked over at his seat, Hackwood Park, near Basingstoke. There accordingly Cockburn visited him, and on the first morning they and Dick Bethell, the eldest son, went out shooting. There were very few pheasants, but after they had been out a little time a terrific howl was heard from one of the keepers, who had been badly shot. A warm altercation, carried on in strong language, occurred between the two Bethells, father and son, each accusing the other of having shot the man. Cockburn took an opportunity of asking the keeper by which of his masters he had been shot, and got the reply, "Damn 'em! both of 'em!" Next term-time there was a meeting of legal dignitaries about this question of reform. Sir Richard Bethell opened the proceedings by saying that he had given the question careful attention, and was glad to say that his learned friend the Attorney-General, to whom he had explained his views, was of his way of thinking. On Cockburn's demurring gently, and saying he did not recollect the discussion having taken place, Sir Richard said, in his most mincing and affected tones, "You must recollect it, my dear friend: *it occurred the morning you shot my keeper!*"

Just before I left, I was talking to Sir Alexander about his having given up hunting, and he told me a good horse-story: A

* Edwin James came to grief in 1862, and was disbarred on account of various disgraceful transactions in which he was involved. He went to America, and practised at the Bar there, but did no good: six years afterwards he returned to London, called himself a "jurisconsult," and advised on "shady" cases. He used to be seen walking the West End in a shabby Inverness cape. He died two or three years ago.

man saw a very handsome chestnut horse at Horncastle Fair, and was astonished at the lowness of the price asked for it. After some chaffering he became the purchaser, taking it without warranty or anything else; and having paid his money, he gave a "tip" of five shillings to the groom, and asked him what was really the matter with the animal that he should be sold so cheap. The man, after some hesitation, declared that the horse was a perfect animal with the exception of two faults. "Two faults!" said the purchaser; "well, tell me one of them." "One is," said the man, "that when you turn him into a field he is very difficult to catch." "That," said the purchaser, "is no harm to me, as I make a point of always keeping my horses in the stable, and never turning them into the field. Now of the other?" "The other," said the man, scratching his head, and looking slyly up—"the other is that when you have caught him he is not worth a rap!"

The Lord Chief held but a poor opinion of his judicial brethren, nor did he rate highly the abilities of any of the leading members of the Bar, with the exception of Mr. Benjamin, of whom he always spoke very highly. He had some good Bar stories, for only two of which I can find space. One was of a very prosy advocate, who, pleading before a full Bench, was constantly repeating his argument. "I am sorry to interrupt you, Mr.——," at length said the senior judge, "but you have already advanced that argument twice, and it is useless your doing so again." "But there are three of your lordships," said the barrister.

Of the other story the *dramatis personæ* are all living, so that I must "dissemble" as regards their names. One day a Mr. Rufus Rightly (who is known in the profession as Mr. Rather Wrongly), in an argument before Mr. Justice Littleton (a very good man and a clever lawyer, though somewhat soft), had put certain questions which were objected to by the opposite side, and which Mr. Justice Littleton accordingly held over until he had consulted his learned brother in the other court. This happened to be Lord Coke, who, on hearing the question,

asked who had put it, and on being told Mr. Rufus Rightly, said, "Oh, I should certainly not allow it; and, my dear Littleton, as a general rule I would never allow any question which that gentleman may put, and which may be objected to." Mr. Justice Littleton returned into court after luncheon, and, when the case was renewed, said, "Oh, Mr. Rightly, I have taken the opinion of my learned brother on the objections which you have raised in this case, and I have decided not to allow them; and I may as well tell you that *in any other case in which you may raise objections, I have decided not to allow them!*"

Cockburn was passionately fond of music, and the leading professors of the art were constant visitors at his house, notably Herr Joachim, who always paid one of his first visits in Hertford Street after his annual arrival in England, and who was to be found there constantly during his stay. The late Mrs. Sartoris (Adelaide Kemble) was also one of Sir Alexander's favourite guests; and the sympathetic qualities of her lovely voice never seem to have lost their effect on him. Mrs. Nassau Senior and Mrs. Rudolf Lehmann were also frequently to be heard in the somewhat gaunt and gloomy drawing-room, which certainly lacked every possible evidence of a woman's care. At one time Cockburn was a constant attendant at the Monday Popular Concerts; but of late years he had given up going there.

Among the *habitués* of Hertford Street were Mr. Henry Calcraft, Dr. Quin, Lord Sherbrooke, Dr. and Mrs. Priestley, and Charles Halle; and Cockburn had a lifelong friendship with the well-known Eton master, the late Rev. W. G. Cookesley.*

Although Sir Alexander never posed for a wit, he was very smart and ready. "I wanted to ask you a question this morning," I said to him one day at dinner, "but you were on the bench. Are you get-at-able by a note there?" "Do you mean a five-pound note?" he asked instantly.

* I had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Cookesley, a very charming man: he was intimate with Mr. Disraeli, from whom he received the living of Tempsford, and there was a curious likeness between him and Cockburn.

He retained to the last his happy power for repartee. In reply to a remark made by some one only the week before his death as to Ireland being a "God-forsaken country," Sir Alexander immediately retorted, "It is not at present so much a 'God-forsaken' as a 'Government-forsaken' country."

His devotion to work may be estimated by the fact that, after a medical consultation, held nearly two years before his death, he was plainly informed that his disease had reached such a point that he might die at any time without a moment's notice. His retirement from the bench was advised by his friends and his medical man; and it was suggested, as an alternative, that he might prolong life by devoting himself to his favourite amusement of yachting and a mild course of literary labour, for the purpose of putting into shape his legal, political, literary, and social reminiscences. The Chief Justice, however, would not hear of retirement, and on each of the three occasions on which he was seized with disease of the heart, returned to work without the needful rest for recuperation.

He had been ailing and failing, for he was in his seventy-ninth year, but his death was almost sudden. On Saturday afternoon, the 20th November, 1880, the Lord Chief Justice walked home from court feeling much as usual, but, as the event proved, for the last time. When his servant took him up his whisky-and-water about eleven o'clock, he complained of not feeling well. Shortly after this he rang his bell, and died in ten minutes, the butler alone being present.

On Sunday, 7th October, 1877, I had the honour of being presented to LORD BEACONSFIELD at Brighton. I was walking in the afternoon on the green esplanade opposite Brunswick Terrace, and saw the Premier leaning on Mr. Corry's arm. I nodded to Mr. Corry, who presently ran after me, saying, "I want to present you to the Prime Minister." Lord Beaconsfield, who wore a long great-coat and curly-brimmed hat, raised his hat in the old-fashioned way, receiving me very graciously. He shook hands, saying, "Very glad to make your

acquaintance, Mr. Yates; hitherto I have only known you by reputation." He motioned that I should fall in by his side, and he walked between Mr. Corry and myself up and down. He expressed himself as much struck by the brightness of the place, he himself having just come "from the middle of the country, where the fall of the leaf made everything very dreary." In his young days, he said, the Steine had been the great place for promenade, but this walk by the side of the sea was certainly preferable.

Mr. Corry then questioned me about the vacant editorship of the *Times*, saying it was impossible there should be truth in the rumour that the post had been offered to Mr. ——. Lord Beaconsfield agreed, saying that —— had some qualifications for the post, but not all that were requisite. He then asked me about Mr. Chenery, whose appointment as successor to Mr. Delane had been notified in *The World*. Lord Beaconsfield said he had heard "that he held a chair of Arabic somewhere," but he did not consider that a very essential qualification for the editor of the *Times*. I ventured to traverse this statement, and told him that Mr. Chenery was an excellent journalist, and had twenty years' experience of the traditions of Printing House Square. "Well, but," continued the Premier, "who will undertake the social part of the business? who will go about in the world and do all that which Mr. Delane did so well?" I said I thought that the discharge of those duties was coveted by Mr. Arthur Walter, the son of the M.P. "He must be a very different man from his father, then," said Lord B., "if he is to succeed in them. Mr. Walter is what I call a plain John Bull-ish kind of man, *without the smallest tact, and very ignorant of manners!*"

We spoke of Dickens. I mentioned that Dickens had told me of his meeting Lord Beaconsfield (then Mr. Disraeli) at dinner; this was only a few weeks before Dickens's death. I told Lord Beaconsfield that, in mentioning the circumstance to me, Dickens had said, "What a delightful man he is! what an extraordinary pity it is that he should ever have given up

literature for politics!" This, as I expected, seemed to amuse Lord Beaconsfield very much. He said, "I remember the occasion perfectly; it was at Lord Stanhope's. I was one day mentioning to him my regret at having seen so little of Mr. Dickens, and he said, 'He is coming to dine here next week; come and meet him.' I went, and sat next to Dickens."

Lord Beaconsfield spoke of the charm of Dickens's conversation, his brightness, and his humour; and I remarked I had always held that Dickens was an exception to the general rule of authors being so much less interesting than their books. I asked Lord Beaconsfield whether it was not in his experience that many men, of whose powers of conversation he had heard much, proved, on meeting them, to be by no means beyond the average.

"That is rather a wide field," he said. "Perhaps, on the whole, you are right; but I can easily understand that you, or any other clever man, finding yourself in the company of a professional writer, and having a smart thing on the tip of your tongue, might hesitate to give it utterance, saying to yourself, 'If I say that, this damned fellow will put it into his article.'"

These were Lord Beaconsfield's *ipsissima verba;* and now that he is gone, and that there can be no harm, *this* "damned fellow" has done so.

THE "PUNCH" STAFF.

Punch is exactly ten years younger than I am, and I can well recollect its first number. I was with my mother when my father brought it to her, saying, "Here is Stirling Coyne's new paper." From what I have since heard and read I should imagine Mr. Coyne's connection with it cannot have been very close or have endured very long. His wit and humour were fully up to the average of the early numbers; but when an improvement took place, and *Punch* gradually settled down to its stride, Coyne's not very excellent farce-jokes must have been found out of place.

Those who are interested in the early fortunes of the

periodical will find them set forth in a little book called *Mr. Punch, his Origin and Career*, which is easily obtainable: they seem to have been of the usual pattern—start, struggle, imminent bankruptcy, purchase by a new proprietary, and ultimate success. The idea was that of a Mr. Last, a printer; the name was suggested by Mr. Henry Mayhew, who was for some time co-editor with Mr. Mark Lemon; and among the earliest members of the staff were Douglas Jerrold, Gilbert a'Beckett, Horace Mayhew, W. H. Wills, and Albert Smith. From the two last my personal knowledge of the early days of *Punch* was derived.

When I first knew anything of the inner life of the periodical, MARK LEMON was its editor. *Quâ* personal appearance he was made for the part. Corpulent, jovial, bright-eyed, with a hearty laugh and an air of *bonhomie*, he rolled through life the outward impersonation of jollity and good temper. Of his early career but little was known. He was much associated with actors, and, I imagine, had been one of them. It is certain that he had been a publican, keeping among other taverns one in Wych Street, called "The Shakespeare," where Albert Smith had seen him, rubbing his hands in his usual efflorescent manner, and crying, "More steaks, gentlemen! coming directly!"

He had no verbal wit, but he was an extraordinarily funny man, full of ridiculous ideas, which he would carry out in a most humorous manner. As Hans Christian Andersen once said to me, after seeing Lemon go through some amusing tomfoolery at a garden-party at Fulham, "Mr. Lemon is most excellent full of comic." Save in dramatic composition, where he excelled—I have in a previous chapter mentioned his *Domestic Economy*, *Hearts are Trumps*, etc.—his original attempts were nothing worth. Late in life he took to novel-writing, but made nothing of it, and his songs and ballads, which he turned out to order, were desperate productions.

But Mark Lemon made an excellent editor of *Punch*. He was a Jew, as his *prénom* and surname sufficiently testify, and

had all the keen appreciation of that quick-witted race. He was patient and longsuffering where his interest was concerned, and could bear without resentment a slight from Thackeray or a snub from Leech. He had a great power of shaking hands, always impressing the owner of the hand shaken that he (the shaker) was, by the process, covered with glory and steeped in delight. But with all this he was, when occasion required, a man of firm will, kept his team together with a strong hand, knew what each man could do best and made him do it, and thoroughly understood the public for which he had to cater.

Lemon died in harness in 1870, and was succeeded by SHIRLEY BROOKS, who had long been his right-hand man and shrewdest counsellor. In such a position Brooks was invaluable: his fertility of resource was matchless; he suggested cartoons for the artists, found titles for the cartoons, wrote the "Essence of Parliament," and never missed a suitable subject or a seizable point.

Shirley Brooks was the son of an architect, and was brought up as a solicitor; but he hated the law, and soon took to literature. For several years his life was that of every respectable literary man, nothing but the prosy tale of sheer industry gradually acquiring lucrative employment. He always brought the business element into his work, and considered that he was as much bound to supply "copy" at the specified time as he would have been, in his law days, to deliver a brief before the hearing. As soon as he could swim without the corks of law he let them float away, and managed to keep his head up, not, however, without more struggle than would be pleasant to, or even good for, everybody. But the world comes to everyone who will wait—and work; and it came to him.

Introduced to Mr. Douglas Cook, then editing the *Morning Chronicle*, which was flickering brilliantly before it finally went out, Brooks, in some literary reviews which he wrote, showed such knowledge and acumen, that on the important office of

summary-writer in the House of Commons falling vacant it was given to him.

At the time of his appointment he had never heard a debate in his life, but he soon learned his work, and continued at it for five sessions, during which time it was impossible for such a man, who really minded and cared for his business, not to pick up a great quantity of miscellaneous as well as political knowledge, of all of which he afterwards availed himself.

Early in his connection with the *Chronicle* its directors resolved upon a widely-spread investigation into the condition of the agricultural classes on the Continent and elsewhere. To Mr. Angus Reach was allotted the inquiry into this class in France; and in that delightful work, *Claret and Olives*, may be seen how admirably he discharged his task. To Mr. Shirley Brooks was offered a similar mission in the south of Russia, Asia Minor, and Egypt. He gladly accepted it, and made a tour of six months, collecting the desired materials. His letters duly appeared in the *Chronicle*, and the Russian portion of them, to which much attention was attracted, were republished in Messrs. Longman's *Travellers' Library*.

How Shirley Brooks fought his way on to *Punch* has already been told in these pages. Once there, he speedily made his value felt. He began with a rather weak novelette, wholly unsuited to his new organ, but he quickly became acclimatized, and thenceforward was king of the position. His "Essence of Parliament" is absolutely unique: his gallery training as summary-writer was of immense value, and not merely was the essence of the actual debate distilled in the alembic of his wit, but retrospect and forecast found places in his fancy. His verses were better than nine-tenths of the poems of his day. His style, both in verse and prose writing, was excessively neat, but his neatness never swamped his humour. He was charmingly witty, but at the same time broadly funny: *e.g.*

"'What are the wild waves saying?'
Said a maid in a round straw hat,
On the sands of Margate playing—
'Papa, can you tell me that?'

Her sire, in grim displeasure,
No kind of an answer made,
Till she fetched him a slight refresher
With the flat of her wooden spade."

A set of verses in a more serious strain are too long to quote entire, but too good not to be rescued from oblivion. The great Sir Robert Peel is supposed to be asking his son Frederick (now Chief Commissioner of Railways, then a young man "about town") his favourite question, "What's a pound?" The son replies:

"A pound, my father, is the price
That clears the Opera wicket:
Two lemon gloves, one lemon ice,
Libretto, and your ticket.
A pound will buy a grape in March,
Will buy a peach in May;
Or, in July, to Ellsler arch
Will fling a rich bouquet."

Sir Robert rebukes him:

"My son, these butterfly remarks
Are trash, as you must feel;
They suit the dandies in the Parks,
Not him who signs him Peel.
I hope to find my offspring tread
On higher, nobler grounds:
And, once again, I ask you, Fred,
To tell me, 'What's a pound?'"

The son replies with his previous frivolity, and then Sir Robert points the moral:

"A labourer lives in yonder cot,
With wife and children five;
And six-and-sixpence, weekly got,
Keeps the whole seven alive.
On this he struggles like a horse,
Or crouches like a hound:
Fred, you can multiply of course—
Now, go and spend your pound!"

Brooks's readiness was as great as Jerrold's, but his humour, with a strong sub-acid flavour, was peculiarly his own. They

were talking once, at my table, of the horrors of catalepsy and being buried alive, and I was mentioning the Frankfort custom of depositing the bodies in the dead-house for twenty-four hours before burial, with a bell-rope attached to the wrist, that a signal might be given in an instant, in the event of returning animation. "Ah," said Brooks, "that custom evidently suggested Tennyson's line—'Many a morning on the moorland did I hear the copses ring!'"

Thoroughly his own too, and uttered with his usual curl of the nostril and lip, was his remark on looking round my bookshelves, and seeing my old school Homer, which Simpson, after patching and mending its back, had labelled "Homer's Iliad." "*Homer's* Iliad," said Brooks, with an inflection on the name—"yes, I believe it *is* the best!"

In his youth Shirley Brooks was a singularly handsome and thoroughly English-looking man, with well-cut features, fresh complexion, and bright eyes. Even at the last, when his hair was silvery white and his beard grizzled, he retained his freshness, which, combined with his hearty genial manner, his appreciation of, and promptitude to enter into, fun, made him look considerably younger than his real age. He was hearty and hospitable, fond of dining at the dinners of rich City companies, where he would make excellent speeches; fond of enjoying the company of a friend at the Garrick Club, or at a corner table in a coffee-room at one of the old hotels in Covent Garden. It was his special delight to gather together at his house in Kent Terrace, Regent's Park, a score of intimate acquaintances on the last night of the old year, and in a few kindly words, as midnight chimed, to wish them happiness and prosperity in the coming season.

Shirley Brooks never took any exercise, and lived fat too well, consequently his originally fine constitution was undermined by a complication of disorders. He hated being away from London, and when in the country or at the sea for his annual holiday looked thoroughly wretched and out of place, wore London clothes and a tall hat, and occupied his

entire time in reading newspapers. He died on the 23rd February, '74. On the day previous he was told that —— (a newspaper reporter) had called to inquire after him. "There is no need for him to do that," Brooks said feebly; "he shall have his paragraph at the proper time."

Shirley Brooks was succeeded in the editorial chair by TOM TAYLOR, who was not a success. In his youth he had some humour of a certain kind, but the salt had lost its savour. As a writer, Taylor was weak; as an editor, vacillating and fidgety. He was at his best in dramatic adaptation, at his worst in his *Punch* work, which was badly chosen, long-winded, and dull. What Taylor spoiled in a pointless column, Brooks would have condensed into a paragraph or a verse bristling with wit. Taylor laboured under the delusion that he was a poet, and the volumes of *Punch* contain more bad verses of his, not merely wanting in the higher qualities of poetry, but halting lines which will not scan, than most periodicals of the same kind. Tom Taylor's principal recommendations in life were his punctuality, kindness of heart, open-handed charity, and thorough respectability. But the possession of these virtues does not qualify a man to be a contributor to a satirical journal: certain of the *dii majores* of that department of literature have been wholly without any of them. Tom Taylor was an excellent man, but an indifferent editor, and *Punch* was at its lowest when under his guidance.

Of his successor, MR. F. C. BURNAND, there is but little occasion to speak. He enlisted under Whitefriars in his youth, and rose in the ranks which he now commands. There is not, perhaps, in the language more exquisite fooling than in his *Happy Thoughts*, the earliest numbers of which excited the admiration of Dickens, who inquired of me about their author. No man has a keener sense of humour than Mr. Burnand, or a greater appreciation of it in others: he is good-tempered, but he never allows himself to be trifled with in the conduct of

his business, and with a perfect geniality takes care to preserve strict discipline.

A man of grave and almost melancholy cast of countenance, handsome withal, was JOHN LEECH; quiet, reserved, and gentlemanly in manner, a hearty hater of posing and noise, and publicity. Save at the weekly dinner, he consorted but little with his colleagues on *Punch*, with the exception of Thackeray: he was intimate, at one time, with Dickens, to whom he gave a walking-stick inscribed "C. D., from J. L.," which Dickens often carried; with Millais, with Mowbray Morris, and with M. J. Higgins. He and Albert Smith had been fellow medical students at the Middlesex Hospital, fellow assistants to that general practitioner who figures in *Ledbury* as "Mr. Rawkins," but in later life there was not much in common between them. I fear Albert was a little too rowdy for Leech. My relations with Leech were always particularly pleasant. He would have undertaken the cover for my first shilling book had he not been too busy; and for my entertainment he drew me an admirable large crayon head of a foreign tenor, for which he would not hear of accepting payment. My old friend MR. W. P. FRITH, R.A., treated me in similar generous fashion.

There was very little that was eventful in Leech's not long life. He was always at work, but was generally behindhand with his cartoons; and half of Lemon's life was passed in hansom cabs, bowling away to Notting Hill, or Brunswick Square, or Kensington, where, in succession, Leech lived. His principal relaxation was hunting, either with the Queen's or the Brighton harriers; and a glance at *Punch* would always tell which watering-place the Leech family had visited during the autumn. He never, to my knowledge, made but one joke: I told him Brough was going to Australia, and he asked, "Was he going to Brough it in the bush?" He used to troll out the old song of "King Death was a rare old fellow," in a deep bass voice; and he had one story which he was fond of telling. He and some friends went to a travelling waxwork

show. The exhibitor, pointing to an attenuated figure in uniform with a star on its breast, said, "King George IV." Leech started, and said, "I thought George IV. was a fat man!" "Did yer?" sneered the showman; "and yer wouldn't be a fat man neither, if you'd been kep without vittles so long as him!"

Leech suffered desperately from a disorder of the nerves, and had a dread, amounting to a monomania, of noise. He died in November '64, aged forty-seven, and was buried at Kensal Green, the funeral service being read by Mr. (now Canon) Hole, who had been Leech's companion on that "Little Tour in Ireland" which they had jointly recorded with pen and pencil.

HORACE MAYHEW was one of those who have found a recognised connection with *Punch* to act as a comfortable life-belt, buoying them up, and enabling them to float prosperously down the stream. He was not largely endowed with native wit, but treated what he had on the gold-beater's principle, and made it go a long way. He was a cheery, lighthearted, good-natured creature, with some power of drawing, a knowledge of French, a good bass voice, and an unfailing power of emitting jokelets. He was cursed with a competence, which prevented the necessity of his striving to do his best, but enabled him to do kindly service to others less fortunate.

Of my experiences of DOUGLAS JERROLD'S wonderful wit I have spoken elsewhere, and I had not the pleasure of MR. GILBERT A'BECKETT'S acquaintance; but I am reminded in this place of two characteristic anecdotes of THACKERAY. I was walking with him one evening from the club, and, passing a fish-shop in New Street, he noticed two different tubs of oysters, one marked "1*s.* a dozen," the other "1*s.* 3*d.* a dozen." "How they must hate each other!" said Thackeray, pointing them out.

A friend called on him on the morning of Sunday, December 15th, 1861, with the *Observer* in his hand. Thackeray spied the black border of the paper instantly, and started up. "The Prince Consort is dead?" he cried. The visitor intimated assent. "Ah!" said Thackeray, dropping into his chair, "*poor dear gentlewoman!*"

MR. J. R. PLANCHÉ was one of my earliest friends; indeed, I believe I first entered juvenile "society" at a child's party at his house in Brompton. He was intimate with my father, about whom he had many good stories. Such a pleasant little man, even in his extreme old age—he was over eighty at his death—and always neatly dressed, showing his French origin in his vivacity and his constant gesticulation. I met him one day at dinner, where he was seated next Mr. A—— M——, who said to him, "It's a dreadful confession, Planché; but now whenever I'm introduced to anyone I have to say, 'I knew your father.'" "Don't mind that, my dear fellow," said Planché; "for years past, under similar circumstances, I've had to say, 'I knew your grandfather.'" He was rather proud of his connection with the Heralds' College, and disliked being joked about it; but he was greatly delighted at the following lines which I addressed to him:

"Mr. Planché, I entreat you, sir! give up the HERALDS' COLLEGE,
Leave Blue-mantle and Clarencieux to fudge heraldic lore,
To vamp armorial bearings, and to scatter useless knowledge
Of *rampant* and of *couchant*, of *argent*, *gules*, and *or!*

Cut your curt-hose, put on trousers! doff your breast-emblazoned tabard!
Clear your cobwebs, seize the pen which you have never plied in vain;
For the bright sword of your wit is growing rusty in its scabbard,
And we long to see it gleaming in the gas-lamps once again!

We remember how it rattled in the joints of Humbug's armour,
Mowed down Conventionality, laid Cant and Error low;
In the hands of Miss Fitzwilliam, or some other *piquante* charmer,
How deftly every cut was dealt, how masterly each blow!

But your mantle, Mr. Planché, has on none of those descended
Who in this present Christmastide pretend to do your work ;
And as to your Excalibur, the least said soonest mended,
For in its stead your followers wield a feeble little dirk.

I mean—to give up metaphor—that where an illustration
Of yours would ring with Attic wit and pungent repartee,
They put their Webster's dictionary through a long gyration,
And leave us finally in doubt as to what their aim may be.

With slang they cram their dialogue—and slang is not amusing—
No gentle lady's tongue should talk of 'going it like bricks !'
'Old cove's' a term which I don't like to hear an actress using ;
Nor is coin most pleasantly described as 'a Joey and three kicks.'

o o o o o

Then, Mr. Planché, come once more and doff your herald's tabard !
Clear your cobwebs, seize the pen which you have never plied in vain ;
For the bright sword of your wit is growing rusty in its scabbard,
And we long to see it flashing in the gas-lamps once again !"

I had the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with the late DUKE OF WELLINGTON, and have heard him say good things and tell amusing stories, but as they were mostly about persons still living, they are not admissible here. The Duke, however, confirmed me about the truth of two stories concerning which I interrogated him, one relating to his father, the other to himself, and which I therefore give. It appears that some tradesmen—I will call them Brown and Smith—had been dunning Lord Charles Wellesley for some time for money due, and at length they wrote to his father the Duke. Then they received the following communication :

"Apsley House.

F.-M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Messrs. Brown and Smith.

The Duke is not Lord Charles Wellesley, neither is he Messrs. Brown and Smith's debt-collector."

The other story is to this effect : Mr. Samuel Warren, Q.C., of *Ten Thousand a Year* fame, was not unaccustomed to attempt

to ingratiate himself by what he considered adroit flatteries. One day, talking with the late Duke, he said, "What a thousand pities it is, Duke, that you were not brought up to political life! If you had been, you would have far excelled your contemporaries, and been the first statesman of the day; nay, even now there is no reason, if you applied yourself, why you should not achieve that position!"

The Duke listened, and then said, "Mr. Warren, I am very glad there is no one here but ourselves to hear you say this!"

"Why, your Grace, why?" asked Warren.

"Because," said the Duke, "they might fancy I was such a damned fool as to believe what you say!"

My first acquaintance with MR. ABRAHAM HAYWARD was made under somewhat peculiar circumstances. I had been reading the first edition of his *Collected Essays*, and wanting more information on a certain point, I took the liberty of calling upon him without introduction, pleading the fact set forth in his book—that he had been acquainted with my father—as an excuse for my temerity. Mr. Hayward, whom I found in the lodging at No. 8 St. James's Street in which he died, received me very graciously, spoke much of my father's varied abilities in public and pleasant gifts in private, and gave me all the information I required. Not by nature a particularly gracious man, his courtesy on this occasion was perhaps due to the fact that I quoted to him his own story of Samuel Rogers and Maltby going to call on Dr. Johnson in Bolt Court, and having their hands on the knocker, when their courage failed them, and they ran away. Hayward was much pleased at this, and said, "You did as Boswell would have done—came boldly in;" and more pleased when I capped the quotation from himself, and said, "And I have been received in all kindness."

The mention of Rogers led to Hayward's showing me a Dantan bust of that very irritable old gentleman, wonderfully

like, appallingly hideous and quaint, warranting Luttrell's remark on reading Rogers's lines,

"The robin with a sidelong glance
Comes and looks at me askance,"

"If it had been a carrion crow it would have looked him straight in the face." We had a long talk about Rogers, of whom I mentioned certain stories told me by Dickens, which Hayward said were quite true, but "scarcely fitted for publication in the *Quarterly Review*."

I saw Hayward pretty frequently afterwards, met him at dinner at Sir Alexander Cockburn's and other houses, and had much talk with him on literary matters. I was in the habit of asking him for information, which he gave me freely. Here is a specimen:

"8 St. James's Street, January 19.

Dear Mr. Yates—I do not know who wrote the article on Wilberforce, but I agree with you that to call him a 'truly delightful person' is an absurdity. I saw a great deal of him, and to me all his agreeability was spoilt by his palpable insincerity. He was a coarse-minded man. The committee of the Athenæum were frequently obliged to write to him about his selfish irregularities. He lodged in Pall Mall, and quite lived at the club. After breakfast it was his custom to sit upon two newspapers while reading a third, or to retire with a whole bundle. The article on 'Plain Whig Principles' is a bit of Reeveism *tout pur*. It is not authorized by the Whig leaders, not by Lord Granville, nor Lord Hartington, nor, to the best of my belief, by any Whig of note.

Faithfully yours,
A. HAYWARD."

And again:

"8 St. James's Street, January 14th, 1880.

I meant to write to you some time since, but better late than never, to say with what pleasure I read your 'Club Case' in *Time*, which completely confirms the impression I have always maintained of it. Indeed, I told Thackeray that he was wrong when he first mentioned it to me. It always struck me that the club had nothing to do with the matter. I think you have done quite right to publish the facts, which can never again be turned to your disadvantage.

Dickens certainly gave you bad advice, and I cannot help thinking that you fell a victim to the ill-feeling between him and Thackeray. I have written an article on Metternich in the forthcoming *Quarterly*, but I quite agree with your opinion of the book, and so, I think, will the reading public."

Some time before this I had obtained his consent to his figuring as a "Celebrity at Home" in the columns of *The World*. He was much pleased with the manner in which the task was performed, and he wrote to me:

"The article was much more pleasing and flattering than I had any reason to expect. I feel much obliged by the kind intention which prompted it, but I assure you that I am very little of a diner-out; and as for the pleasures of the table, I regard them as depending much more on the company than the cookery. I found *The World* a general topic at Strawberry Hill."

I have a note in my diary:

"Tuesday, January 15, 1878.—To-day met Hayward in Bond Street. I told him I had been just reading his article on Lord Melbourne in the new number of the *Quarterly*, and that I remembered his previous paper on the same subject printed in his *Essays*. Hayward was much pleased. He took me aside and talked to me for many minutes. He said the last time he saw Lord Melbourne was a few months before his death at Brockett. It was July, but Lord Melbourne was sitting before a roaring fire, Mrs. —— walking up and down the room in an agony of tears. Lord Melbourne, suddenly turning to Hayward, said, 'It's a damned good thing for a man to have a balance at his banker's.' And then he added, 'It's a damned bad thing for a woman to *find it* out.' After Melbourne's death W—— C—— told Hayward that on that very day he (Lord Melbourne) had drawn a cheque for seven hundred pounds in favour of Mrs. ——."

And again:

"Coming out of the Grosvenor Gallery with Hayward, we saw Sir Robert Peel in a cab, and Hayward began talking about his father and the accident which killed him. He was riding on Constitution Hill, when two young ladies galloped up, causing his horse to shy, and he fell on his ribs, one of which penetrated his lungs,

and eventually caused death. Chloroform was not known then, and Sir Robert was most sensitive to pain, else it is believed had he undergone an operation he might have been saved."*

Here are some explanations of one of his *Quarterly* articles which Hayward gave me: The "literary man of note" who was asked to dinner on the ground that he was well versed in Massinger and Marlow, with whom he proved to have only a superficial acquaintance, was John Forster. The celebrated beauty who asked Lord Melbourne whether Baron Maule was the man he (Melbourne) made a judge of for burning down the Tower was Lady Harriet d'Orsay. Hayward's note to me says: "She was a very clever woman, though a languishing beauty, and meant it satirically." The "eminent man of letters" whose *beau idéal* of a wife or mistress was a woman who would sit on a footstool at his feet, looking up fondly in his face, and only interrupt him to whisper that he was the handsomest creature on earth, was Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton.

I suppose that most people who knew him would be of the cabmen's opinion, that MR. JOHN FORSTER was a very "harbitrary gent;" but to me he was, I am bound to say, always amiable, friendly, and helpful. It was through Dickens's influence and recommendation mainly, no doubt, that he thus made me an exception to his general rule, but I think he also had a personal regard for me.

A friend who was staying at Gadshill at the time when my first novel appeared told me that Forster, with a book in his hand, greeted Dickens coming in to luncheon with,

"I have been reading, my dear Dickens, this book of Mr. Yates's. Do you know it is really very good, my dear Dickens —quite as good as Mr. Anthony Trollope."

* As an illustration of his father's sensitiveness, the present Sir Robert Peel told me he well remembers on one occasion Sir Henry Halford, the eminent physician, giving an account of a railway accident which he had witnessed, and which he described with such minuteness that Sir Robert had to stop him, as he was on the point of fainting.

"That is not very high praise," said Dickens, and sat down to his lunch.

Dickens used to tell a very characteristic story of Forster, which has never found its way into print. At the commencement of hostilities between Dickens and Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, the copyright of *Household Words* was sold by auction at Mr. Hodgson's. Dickens was represented at the sale by John Forster and Arthur Smith, another intimate friend and ally of his, whom we will call Mr. Blank, being also present. When the sale was concluded, Mr. Blank was the first to arrive at the office in Wellington Street, where Dickens was anxiously awaiting the news. Having told it, Mr. Blank said,

"I cannot resist telling you how admirable Forster was throughout: cool, prompt, and energetic, he won the day with his business-like readiness."

Blank departed, and Forster arrived; and in the course of the interview Dickens, thinking it would please him, took occasion to tell what had been said about him by Blank.

"I am very sorry, my dear Dickens," said Forster, "that I cannot return the compliment, for a damneder ass than your friend Mr. Blank I never met in a business affair."

Mr. Forster was very much interested in the success of *The World*, about which I had a long talk with him at his house at Palace Gate in the autumn of 1875. He told me that in its palmiest times the *Examiner*, with which he was connected for twenty years, had never attained a third of our then circulation. The following letters will give a good idea of the man in his later days:

"Ninth December, 1875.

I wish to send a copy of my *Swift* volume to you at your private address, if you will be so good as to tell me where. You will, perhaps—when I add that the book comes to you with no view or *desire for* review in *The World*—not be quite ready to believe me. You will, nevertheless, be wrong in that. When Mr. Murray sent me a list of press copies—a very short one only—*The World* did not appear, and I quite acquiesced, not making any addition to it, or inserting *The World*. You may well suppose that I have not

much care for the worst public notices, nor much pleasure in the best, as matters now go with me. Just look into the volume when you find a leisure hour, and if you think of the friend now gone who taught me to feel an interest in you, you will not be likely to think unkindly of it or of me. But I *entreat* that you will not consider it right or needful to say a public word about it."

I did consider it right that public words, both about the book and its author, should be said in *The World*, and they were said; with what effect upon the latter his letter will testify:

"5th Jan., 1876.

My dear Yates,—You are very good and kind to me. You have done thoroughly what you wished to do: you have given me pleasure—pleasure unalloyed by anything excepting doubt (which does not on this occasion distress one as perhaps it ought) whether all the friendly expressions are deserved; but generous words are not for criticism. The article is written throughout with a nice consideration, and there are some things in it that have touched me very much. Again I heartily thank you for it, and beg you to believe me,

Very sincerely yours,
JOHN FORSTER."

My intercourse with CHARLES READE was always pleasant, but never intimate. I was a member of the Garrick Club when he was elected, and first used to excite the indignation of the old gentlemen by changing his boots for a pair of slippers, which he kept in a dressing-room, and in which he, tiger-like, walked to and fro, perambulating the coffee-room.

On one occasion I owed much to his good services. I was lecturing at Oxford, and declining to submit to the "chaff" of a knot of undergraduates at the end of the room, I shut up my book and retired, that being the signal for the commencement of a row in which I was freely threatened. Charles Reade, who was staying at the time in his Magdalen rooms, pushed his way into the middle of the disturbance, claimed me as his friend, and pacified the rioters, with whom we both of us spent a jolly evening.

From time to time I had short letters from him of various kinds, one of which, showing his method of work and his odd notions of literary *meum* and *tuum*, I subjoin :

"2 Albert Terrace, Knightsbridge, December 11th.

Dear Yates,—I observe that you publish short stories in *The World*. I seldom do anything in that way, but it so happens that I have one to dispose of. It came about thus : My letters on the wrongs of authors elicited a shoal of communications from the United States, and amongst them one from a young author, who complained that he could not get his American sketches published in America because he is not an Englishman. "Send me one," said I. He did so ; and finding there was some good stuff in it, marred in many places by garrulity and other defects of inexperience, I agreed to work on it. I cut and improved the good, and excised the bad, especially high falutin, and a piece of preposterous tragedy that spoiled the lot. Thus handled, it seems to me to read well, and I am not the least ashamed to sign my name to it, only, as a matter of international probity, I must put the American author's name first. If this outline indicates anything acceptable, I shall be happy to submit the manuscript for approval. If not, please tell me.

Yours truly,
CHARLES READE."

MR. MARTIN TUPPER'S family and mine had, as has been already stated, been long acquainted. His father was the senior partner in the then well-known medical firm of Tupper, Chilvers, and Brown, in Old Burlington Street, the junior partner having the good luck to marry Miss Meredith, for so many years the intimate friend and companion of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. My first meeting with Mr. Martin Tupper was at the house of a common friend at Albury, where I was staying. Mr. Tupper, who lived in the neighbourhood, received me with great cordiality, and asked me to come and see him the next day. During my visit he showed me an immense volume, in which were pasted all the criticisms, favourable and unfavourable, of his works, and all the parodies ; among the latter I saw, with horror, some which I had written, and, with more horror, a

marginal note in Mr. Tupper's handwriting, "I understand these to be by Edmund Yates: they are very smart." He was particularly kind and good-natured over the matter.

The first time I met LORD TENNYSON was in Mr. Tupper's company, at the house of Mr. J. Bertrand Payne, the then representative of Moxon and Co., where a few literary men were gathered together. It was the first time that the two poets had met, and it was most amusing to watch their bearing to each other. The proofs of Mr. Hughes' recently finished drawings for the illustrated edition of *Enoch Arden* were submitted to the Laureate, who approved of them all with one exception. "This is not right," he said in his deep voice. "'There came so loud a calling of the sea.' The man cannot have lived by the sea; he does not know what a 'calling' means. It is anything but a great upheaval such as is here represented."

Of CARLYLE I may say *vidi tantum*. I was presented to him by Dickens one day when we met him walking down Portland Place, but as we parted from him Dickens told me a good story. He had met Carlyle at dinner a few nights before, where there was present a certain pompous gentleman, who still lives to adjust literary reputations. A question of some moment having been started, it was promptly disposed of by this personage, who, as Dickens said, "in his usual style, took hold of it, made it into a small parcel, and laid it away on a shelf, not to be moved thence any more." It seems that after the oracle had delivered himself there was a dead silence, in the midst of which Carlyle, who had been blankly gazing at the great personage opposite to him, said in a truly absent manner, but perfectly audible, "Eh, but you're a puir creatur—a puir, wratched, meeserable creatur," and then went on with his dinner.

On Folkestone pier my old friend George Henry Lewes presented me to GEORGE ELIOT. They had been intending to cross the Channel that day, but were delayed by the rough weather. We had some very pleasant talk, and the great

novelist was good enough to remember some articles of mine in the *Illustrated Times* on the first appearance of her *Scenes of Clerical Life*, in which I had doubted the claims of one Mr. Joseph Liggins, who had announced himself as the author of the book.

But with George Henry Lewes, before his "union" with Miss Evans, in the early years of the fifties, when he was living with his wife, a pretty woman of the large-eyed Dudu order, I had a pleasant acquaintance, receiving much kindly notice from him. He was at that time a small man of slight stature, with long curling light hair and a pock-marked face; singularly plain, but with all the John Wilkes power of talking his face away, with a bright manner and a charming smile. Profound physiologist and philosopher, excellent linguist, botanist, chemist, no one ever wore the weight of learning so lightly, or in intervals of relaxation wielded a more amusing pen. As G. H. Lewes he was heavy enough for the *Westminster;* as "Vivian" he would have been welcomed on *The World.* All his work for the *Leader* was light and bright, though there was plenty of muscle and fibre in his dramatic criticism. Curiously enough, when he attempted novel-writing he failed dismally; his *Ranthorpe* is wearisome, and his *Rose, Blanche, and Violet* sad twaddle.

Like most plain men, he was not devoid of personal vanity. We went once, a party of us, to see an exhibition of some dwarfs—hideous human specimens—called "the Earthmen," and one of the females seemed greatly taken with Lewes. Upon which Jerrold, looking up in his quaint way, said, "Ah, Vivian, 'framed to make (Earth) women false!'" And Lewes was quite pleased at the compliment. At one time a number of men banded themselves together to try and abolish the ordinary chimney-pot hat, substituting for it something more graceful in form and more flexible in material; and it was always assumed that the movement was spoilt by the premature appearance of Lewes in a Tyrolean hat, to which he scarcely gave distinction.

In treating of Miss Evans to outsiders he used to speak in terms of hyperbolical mystery, which would have well suited a priest of the Grand Llama of Thibet, but were scarcely admissible under the circumstances. I have a letter written on his own volition, on the appearance in *The World* of some notice of George Eliot's works, which is absolutely ludicrous in its portentous solemnity. Portions of the notice pleased him very much, as exhibiting some appreciation of her real genius, and these portions were casually and drop by drop to be distilled into the ears of the great being, who never read any notices of her books, and who only learned what the outer world thought of them through the interpretation of the ministering priest.

I remember at the time of the publication of *Adam Bede* writing to Dickens to tell me the real name of its author. His very funny reply was to the effect that "it is either Bradbury or Evans; but I do not think that it is Bradbury."

I had a good deal of intercourse and communication with MR. J. T. DELANE during the last years of his life. He was very sensitive about any notice being taken of his failing health. He writes to me on June 15:

"I am very much obliged to you for the considerate notice of my little accident, and above all for reserving it until you could announce the recovery, which saves me a deluge of 'kind' inquiries much harder to bear than the fall itself."

And again:

"October 23rd.

I am very much obliged to you for intimating that there is no necessity for people to occupy themselves with my health. I have this moment returned from Blenheim, the last of a series of autumnal visits, and have no intention of leaving town again before Christmas, when I shall endeavour to fulfil some shooting engagements. My health is excellent, and I hope no unfavourable conclusion will be drawn from the fact that I declined to shoot partridges in the heavy rain of yesterday."

The following is of special interest :

"16 Serjeants' Inn, June 15.

Dear Mr. Yates,—You would much oblige me if you would contradict, in the next number of *The World*, the statement in the last ———, of my resignation as editor of the *Times*. There is absolutely no foundation whatever for the rumour, and the suggestion that I resigned in sympathy with Mr. Sampson is particularly offensive, considering the circumstances under which he did resign. As a matter of fact, I had no acquaintance with Mr. Sampson, and certainly no sympathy with him.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. T. DELANE."

Mr. Delane held fast to the old-fashioned theory that the editor of a newspaper should be an impersonal myth, and in replying to my request that an old friend of his might be allowed to write an article on him for the series of "Celebrities at Home," sent me the following :

"16 Serjeants' Inn, February 22.

Dear Mr. Yates,—Ever since I first saw you personate a slack-rope-dancer at Mrs. Horace Twiss's some twenty-five years ago,* I have had frequent proof of your kindness, for which I am by no means ungrateful ; but the culminating proof of your desire to please will be if you will spare me from being included in your 'Celebrities at Home.' Pray let me remain at home in the shabby little house I have occupied for the last thirty years, and where my anxious desire has always been to avoid becoming a celebrity. Any public notice of myself or my habits has caused me such annoyance that I feel justified in attaching an importance which would otherwise appear altogether disproportionate to the request. Leave me in my obscurity, dear Mr. Yates, and I shall ever be your debtor.

Faithfully yours,
J. T. DELANE."

* Mr. Delane is here mixing up the dinner-party at Horace Twiss's at which Albert Smith and others performed (see p. 152), with the Amateur Pantomime.

It is lucky for me that emperors, kings, princes, statesmen, and "men of light and leading" of all kinds have not been influenced by these feelings.

Many of my early days were spent in company with Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, the latter of whom happily survives to this day. ROBERT KEELEY was not merely an admirable actor: he was a man possessed of much common sense and mother-wit, and had a certain amount of reading. In private, as in public, his utterances were given forth with an extraordinary stolidity of manner and expression, which rendered them doubly amusing.

He had a great vein of shrewd sensible humour. Standing by me one day at a window of the Swan Inn at Thames Ditton, looking at the ducks wending their way across the lawn in a pouring shower, loudly quacking their delight, Keeley softly muttered under his breath, "Ha, ha, damned fools! you don't think how this rain is making the green-peas grow!"

Nor shall I readily forget seeing him standing in the window of an hotel at Boulogne, where a little *marchande des fleurs* was offering him her wares.

"Des fleurs, monsieur?" said the little girl.

"Pas aujourd'hui."

"Monsieur, achetez des fleurs!"

The request met with the same response.

A third time the girl tried, to receive a similar rebuff; but, on a fourth application, Keeley turned from the window, muttering as he went,

"I have said 'Pas aujourd'hui' three times, and now you may go to the devil!"

I did not see much of BUCKSTONE in his later life, but when we met we were always on the pleasantest terms. He was an excellent *raconteur*, and none of his stories went off better than those against himself, which he told freely. Here is one of them. Coming home late one night to his private house, which

adjoined the back portion of the Haymarket premises in Suffolk Street, he found a man leaning up against the stage-door of the theatre, very drunk and vomiting violently. Disgusted at the sight, Buckstone went up to the wretched creature, and desired him to go off.

"Get along! go to ——!" was all his reply.

Buckstone reiterated his abjurgations, but failed to get anything more definite out of the man, until, in the height of his anger, he cried,

"I will call the police, sir! Do you know who I am?"

Upon which the man, with a chuckle, replied,

"Of course I do; some stupid ass giving a devilish bad imitation of Buckstone."

His later days were full of poverty and sadness, and his sensibility was much keener than most persons believe. A short time before his death I sent him some letters written by him to my father many years before, which I knew would interest and amuse him.

They came back with these words:

"I return you the letters, interesting certainly, but conveying a melancholy feeling. They carry me back forty years; I wish they could do so in reality. Not that I care much for a longer life; but I have seven young children and a wife, whom, old as I am, I love, and for their sakes alone I wish for a little more working-time."

Some of the wittiest and most amusing letters I have ever received came to me during my editorship of *Temple Bar* from MISS BRADDON, several of whose earlier attempts made their appearance under my direction, and who has always honoured me with a steady friendship.

"Did you see," she writes, "what the —— says about *Aurora Floyd* and my philosophy in the matter of beer, brandy, and cigars and tobacco? It is all Mr. Tinsley's fault for advertising me as 'Mary Elizabeth.' I used to be called *Mr.* Braddon, and provincial critics were wont to regret that my experience of women had been so bitter as to make me an implacable foe to the fair sex. They thought I had been 'cradled into magazines by wrong,' and had

learned in the Divorce Court what I taught in three-volume novels."

Hear her again as to the style in which these same three-volume novels are very often written:

"The Balzac-morbid-anatomy school is my especial delight, but it seems you want the right-down sensational; floppings at the end of chapters, and bits of paper hidden in secret drawers; bank-notes and title-deeds under the carpet, and a part of the body putrefying in the coal-scuttle. By the bye, what a splendid novel, *à la* Wilkie Collins, one might write on a protracted search for the missing members of a murdered man, dividing the arms not into *books*, but *bits!* 'BIT THE FIRST: The leg in the gray stocking found at Deptford.' 'BIT THE SECOND: The white hand and the onyx ring with half an initial letter (unknown) and crest, skull with a coronet, found in an Alpine *crevasse*."

Seriously, though, you want a sensational fiction to commence in January, you tell me. I cannot promise you anything new, when, alas, I look round and find everything on this earth seems to have been done, and done, and done again! Did not Jules Janin so complain long ago in a protest against romancism, *i.e.* sensationalism? I will give the kaleidoscope (which I cannot spell) another turn, and will do my very best with the old bits of glass and pins and rubbish.

There they all are—the young lady who has married a burglar, and who does not want to introduce him to her friends; the duke (after the manner of ——) who comes into the world with six-and-thirty pages of graphic detail, and goes out of it without having said 'bo!' to a goose; the two brothers who are perpetually taken for one another; the twin-sisters ditto, ditto; the high-bred and conscientious banker, who has made away with everybody's title-deeds. Any novel combination of the well-known figures is completely at your service, workmanship careful, delivery prompt."

I saw JULES JANIN twice, once in life, once in death. The first occasion was at a dinner given by M. de la Grené at Ledoyen's open-air restaurant, in the Champs Elysées. There were present several naval officers, some *mondains*, and a few journalists, among the latter Emile de Girardin and Jules Janin. It was my good fortune to be placed next Janin,

whose work, *bavardage* though it were, I had long admired. He talked freely and pleasantly of the Dumas *père et fils*, of Marie du Plessis, the original of Marguerite Gauthier, of Rachel and Déjazet and Schneider, and many other *reines de la rampe*. Of the Dumas he told me an excellent story. It appears that on the publication of *La Dame aux Camélias*, old Alexandre wrote to his son, as though to a stranger, congratulating him on his book, and adding that he ought to know something about the difficulties of novel-writing, as he had himself been guilty of several. Alexandre *fils* replied in the same spirit, thanking his correspondent for his congratulations, of which he felt specially proud, *as coming from one of whom he had often heard his father speak in the highest terms!*

The second occasion was on Saturday, the 20th June, 1874. Janin had died the night before at his house in the Rue de la Pompe, Passy, and I was asked by a friend of mine, a former colleague of the great critic's, to accompany him on his visit of condolence. Such a pretty house, built in the style of a Swiss châlet, and standing in the midst of a garden full of waving trees, velvet turf, and sweet-smelling flowers. In this garden Janin used, in the summer, to receive his friends, members of the literary world, so proud to pay homage to their illustrious *confrère*. Amid the iron-work of its outer gate was worked the monogram "J. J.," initials so eagerly looked for in the *Journal des Débats* every Sunday for forty years. We sent in our cards, and a gentleman came out of the house to receive us—a type of a certain class of Frenchmen, small, grey, self-possessed, dressed in black, with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole.

In answer to our interrogatories, having first announced himself as Dr. Villette, the family physician, he told us that M. Janin had expired very peacefully and without a struggle. For weeks past his corpulency had been so enormous that he had been unable to move himself, but had to be carried by his servants from place to place. On this Friday afternoon he had eaten rather more dinner than usual, a little *bouillon*,

instead of the cup of milk which had recently sufficed for his meal, and feeling fatigued, desired a servant to help him to bed. As he reached the couch he gave one long sigh, and it was all over. The rumour that he had been for some time out of his mind had, the doctor declared, no real foundation.

The knowledge that he had lost for ever the power of locomotion affected him very much. Not long before his death he said to some friends, "I suppose I am celebrated; I am a great writer; I am a member of the Academy! *Eh bien*, I would renounce all that glory to walk—to walk round this room without assistance!" And he was specially irritated by the compassionate looks with which visitors would regard him. They did not like to openly express their pity, but they looked it. Janin, with his quick appreciation, recognised what was meant, and suffered under it horribly, but in silence. It was from this, Dr. Villette thought, that the idea of his dementia had first arisen.

At the doctor's invitation we walked into the chamber of death, where the body then lay. It was a large dining-room, on the second-floor, painted in gay colours, with a large open fireplace in the style of the Renaissance, and with windows opening on to the garden. Owing to its easiness of access M. Janin had for some time used it as his dwelling-room, and there he died on a couch on which Béranger had also breathed his last. At a table in a corner sat a priest, an old lady, and two old gentlemen. The old lady had a long list before her, from which she read aloud various names, and the old gentlemen and the priest put cards into envelopes which they addressed. These cards were the invitations to *faire part*, as it is called—to take part in the funeral ceremony. They looked around for a moment as we entered, but immediately returned to their business, which they carried out, I am bound to say, without apparently the smallest appreciation of the surrounding circumstances. And yet one might have thought that even the most careless would have been impressed; for there, on a low bed in the middle of the room, lay the remains of one

who for a quarter of a century had been one of the most shining lights of French journalism, and who had won for himself a world-wide reputation. The expression on the hairless face was mild and childlike, as though the seventy years' contest with the world had left no impression on it, calm and innocent, as of a happy old man in a peaceful slumber.

The doctor accompanied us through the house. Behind the mortuary chamber was the kitchen, bright and glistening with its *batterie de cuisine*, its shining pots and stewpans. The broad staircase leading to the first floor was hung with rare engravings after the ancient masters. At the top of the staircase was the small winter dining-room, and leading out of it a huge chamber, used indiscriminately as dining-room and library. In each of the four corners of this room was an enormous bookcase in black oak, filled with Aldines and Elzevirs, rare editions of rare works. Above the white marble mantelpiece with its Louis Seize clock was a portrait of Madame Janin; in front of the window, on a column pedestal, a marble bust of Janin, and close by his desk, covered with papers written over in blue ink. There, enveloped in a dressing-gown and with a silk travelling-cap on his head, he used to work. Here he passed the last fifteen years of his life; here he wrote his translation of Horace, his *Neveu de Rameau*, his holiday *feuilletons* for the *Débats*.

As we returned to Paris my friend told me several anecdotes of Janin. His handwriting was very bad, a nightmare for a printer, so illegible that only two compositors out of the whole staff of the *Débats* were able to translate it. When he contributed to any other periodical he always dictated his work to Madame Janin, who wrote an excellent hand. One day he wrote a letter to a friend, who after much trouble deciphered two or three words, which made him think his correspondent must be Janin. He immediately started for Passy.

"Ah, here you are!" cried Janin on seeing him; "you have read my letter?"

"Not at all," replied the friend; "I have received it, and I've brought it here for you to read it to me."

"Well," said Janin, much cast down, "I'll try."

Janin was not malicious, but occasionally he would say a bitter thing. A rich but hard-hearted man, who made sad havoc of the French language, called on him one day. After listening and suffering for some time, Janin spoke to his visitor in Latin. The man was astonished.

"I don't understand you, M. Janin," he said after a pause; "I don't speak Latin."

"Try, sir, try!" cried the great critic; "you could not speak it so badly as you do French."

Janin was buried on the following Monday, and I attended the funeral. Among those assembled in the garden of the house, before the procession started, I saw Emile Girardin, in his short coat and with his *pince-nez;* Dumas *fils*, whose hair had grown grey, and who was becoming more and more like his father; John Lemoinne, a small English-looking man; swarthy Henri de Péne, with his glass fixed in his eye; grey, stout M. de Lesseps; Mélingue, the famous actor, the original Buridan in the *Tour de Nesle;* Arsène Houssaye, Nadar the photographer, and Alberic Second. I was standing by a table on which were several sheets of paper inscribed with the names of the visitors. An old gentleman with a white head and a short-cut white beard, a red pleasant face, dressed in an alpaca jacket, and carrying a straw hat in his hand, came up to *inscrire*, and gave me a kindly bow as I made way for him. As he left I looked down at the paper to see what his name might be, and was astonished to read the words "Victor Hugo."

There was a special reason why I should stand well in MR. E. A. SOTHERN'S good graces, for in the columns of the *Daily News* I warmly welcomed him, and prophesied his future success.

We speedily became friends, and remained so during his life. I imagine his happiest time was when he was living at The Cedars in Wright's Lane, Kensington (a house which, after his

day, found a very different tenant in Monsignor Capel), when he was in the full swing of his popularity, much courted and flattered by "smart" people, and adored by the public. At that time, though constantly in society, and necessarily keeping late hours, he hunted regularly with the Queen's or the Baron's, and sometimes even more distant packs, and lived with strict moderation.

His practical joking, always one of his favourite pastimes, was sufficiently pronounced in those days, though not carried to the extent which it reached on his later visits to America. The most successful of these Transatlantic hoaxes was his inviting an English stranger (Mr. Lee), who wished to see the manners of the New Yorkers, to a dinner, at which certain well-known negro minstrels—Messrs. Dan and Neil Bryant, Nelse Seymour, etc., attended, without their burnt cork, and were introduced to the English stranger as some of "our prominent citizens." Upon the party sitting down to dinner, after an interchange of the usual courtesies, Neil Bryant tied his napkin round his head, and began nodding violently. Mr. Lee asked for an explanation from his next neighbour, and was confidentially informed that these peculiar actions were the result of hereditary eccentricity.

Other eccentricities following, however, both on the part of Mr. Bryant and his associates, Mr. Lee became indignant. Mr. Sothern, on behalf of his fellow-countrymen, protested against the proceedings with assumed earnestness. Mr. Florence, with apparent good faith, admonished Mr. Sothern not to interfere. Nelse Seymour, pretending to be greatly incensed against Mr. Bryant, rushed upon him with a carving-knife. Mr. Bryant drew a revolver, and a sham fight occurred between himself, Mr. Seymour, and several others. The result not being deemed satisfactory, Messrs. Sothern and Florence proposed to fight a duel on the spot, and immediately drew pistols, ostensibly for that purpose.

It was, I think, through my recommendation that Sothern cancelled his final American engagement, and husbanded such

strength as yet remained to him. He came to stay with me at Goring, evidently dreadfully ill, but trying to carry it off with a jaunty air. He was going to Yarmouth on a fishing expedition, then back to America, to fulfil numberless engagements. "He had been a little out of sorts, but would soon be right again," etc. When I took the freedom of a friend, and spoke to him seriously, he confessed that he was in a desperate state of health. I sent him to my friend Dr. Roose at Brighton, who patched him up for a bit; but the malady had advanced too far. The careful moderation in eating and drinking which distinguished him when I first knew him had, I am afraid, been given up for many years past; his constitution was undermined, and he died in the following year.

As an amusing companion next in order to Dickens I should certainly rank CHARLES MATHEWS. I did not become intimately acquainted with him until he was nearly sixty-five; but I certainly never had a younger, more amusing, more vivacious friend. In his little house in Pelham Crescent, Brompton, which was crammed from attic to basement with works of art, most of them drawings made by young Charles Mathews when he went abroad with the "Blessingtons" to study architecture in Italy, he was the cheeriest and most agreeable of hosts. Smoking-capped and dressing-gowned—for he invariably declined, either at home or abroad, to give way to the conventionality of evening-dress—seated at the head of his table after dinner, with one of the worst cigars imaginable—his tobacco was the only bad thing in his house—in his mouth, he would not only talk most admirably himself, but be the cause of excellent talk in others. There Planché would forget that he was even his host's senior, and contribute his quota of seasoned jest; there Arthur Sketchley, "talented, though obese," as he would describe himself, would be very funny himself, and the cause of much more fun in Henry James Byron, who was never seen to greater advantage than in Pelham Crescent.

Mathews was an excellent letter-writer too. From the far

shores of Lake Michigan I sent him a reminder of my existence. He seems, from the following reply, to have found my manuscript somewhat illegible:

"Hôtel d'Angleterre, Nice,
January 28th, 1873.

My dear Edmund,—I was delighted and surprised at receiving a letter in Arabic from, as I supposed, our old Cairo Dragoman Hamet; but, on deciphering the commencement, and discovering it unmistakably to be 'My dear Charley,' I began to think I must be in error, as I never remember his having addressed me so familiarly before; and as, on referring to the date and address, I clearly made out 'Bancroft House,' I exclaimed at once, 'How stupid I am! Of course, it's from Marie Wilton! And yet, when did she move to Cat Sapient Milk?'* . Turning to the signature (as I ought to have done at first), the mystery was solved, and I immediately set apart five hours for the reading, at the end of which time I had nearly made out every other word, and by dinner-time yesterday had pretty well mastered the contents.

Well, I *was* glad to receive the letter, I confess. We thought you had forgotten us altogether; and Lizzie actually made *observations* (I won't repeat them) on your never coming to look us up on our return from the antipodes. Never mind, she will *fix* you yet; you *shan't* walk up and down, and tell your stories; and we *won't* laugh at them if you tell them sitting; and I won't tell you any of mine, nor Lizzie any of hers—there now!

I'm not going to write you a long letter, so don't you think it. While you are shivering and shaking, snowed up at Cat Sapient Milk, we are basking under sun-umbrellas in the midst of orange and lemon groves, palms, olives, and figs, by the side of the turquoise sea, and grudge every moment in the house, with a positive horror of pen and ink. So we'll put off all we have to say till we meet, which, without any nonsense, we both wish may be soon, with all our hearts; for we both love a cordial laugh, and with no one do we get it so well as with jolly old Edmund. With our united loves and good wishes for your success and return,

Ever faithfully yours,
C. J. MATHEWS."

* "Cat Sapient Milk" must have been his reading, of course, of my illegible writing.

There are frequent references to MORTIMER COLLINS throughout these pages, a man for whom I had great regard as a friend and the greatest admiration as a lyrist.

His place is yet unfilled. There are hundreds of society verse-makers and of imitators of Praed, but no Mortimer Collins. Searchers in back numbers of *Temple Bar* and *The World* will find many exquisite lyrics, which have not yet been republished; but here is a gem of another kind, which was printed in an obscure periodical that had a very short existence. It was written on the occasion of the appearance of an advertisement announcing a new novel by the Rev. J. M. Bellew:

"Oh, oh, oh! what a wondrous city is
London! If you wish for pleasures that are new,
If you are bored or bothered, which a pity is,
Mind and send at once for the novel by Bellew.

He, he, he, who talent does not lack at will,
Surely he will give us something very new;
Publish it for him the firm of Hurst and Blackett will,
And make, I hope, a fortune of this novel by Bellew.

Bel-bel-bellow, the title at the termini;
Shout out the name—it's the proper thing to do;
A fascinating fellow, who can preach a clever sermon, I
Guess will be the hero of this novel by Bellew.

P'raps—p'raps—p'raps, the scene at the diggins is;
Perhaps it is in India, across the ocean blue;
Anyhow, the gentleman whose real name Higgins is*
Now is coming out with a novel by Bellew!

Spur-Spur-Spurgeon, on, poke him up and urge him on;
He's the only man this Higgins to outdo.
Surely he won't let himself be beaten by a clergyman,
Surely he'll excel this novel by Bellew!"

* J. M. B.'s original name was Higgins.

CHAPTER XIII.

LATER DAYS IN THE POST OFFICE.

WITH the occasional break afforded by the special trips recorded in an earlier chapter, and by the annually recurring month's holiday, which was generally spent with my family at some quiet seaside place, my official life went on in tolerably regular course.

It was supposed, by my literary friends, to be a monotonous life; and I was often greatly compassionated, principally by those who lounged through their existence, and were vastly indignant if the ravens, or their equivalent, did not cater for them lavishly. I do not think that the monotony preyed very much upon me; I always found plenty of amusement in my morning omnibus-rides, in which, despite Sir Rowland Hill's kindly admonition, I persevered till the last; I liked the pleasant conference with friends at luncheon-time; and, though the work itself—the superintendence of the post office buildings in large towns and the provision of proper postal accommodation for the public throughout the provinces—was not particularly enthralling, a student of character could find plenty of opportunity in the correspondence with the local magnates, and the observation of the discomfiture of the Parliamentary representatives under pressure by their constituents.

I do not know that I myself should have enjoyed it so much as I did, had not fortune decreed that the one position to

which I should most eagerly have aspired, and which more than any other in the service I could satisfactorily have filled, should fall vacant just at the time when I was ripe for promotion, and that I should have been appointed to it. This was the head of the Missing Letter Branch of the Secretary's office, and the performance of its duties not merely gave one the chance of showing individual capacity, but of escaping from the ordinary routine.

The Missing Letter Branch was a speciality; it undertook to investigate all complaints and applications from the public regarding letters which had not reached their destination; and as fraud, as well as accident, was a large factor in these irregularities, I was constantly engaged in following up the mysterious ramifications of romances of real life, with all the looked-for adjuncts of traps, detectives, private examinations, etc. All cases of theft, or that bore any suspicious appearance, were brought under my cognisance, and duly submitted by me, to Mr. William Peacock, the Assistant-Solicitor, who is still living, though he has long since retired, whose name was thoroughly well known to the public, and whose genial appearance must still be fresh in the memory of a large number of the Bar.

In addition to a large staff of clerks, I had the assistance of four "travelling officers," who were constantly employed in confidential investigations in the country, and four first-class detectives of the A division from Scotland Yard, two of whom would be attached to such of the travelling officers as wanted extra help, while the other two were on duty in a glass case fitted up in the hall of the General Post Office, into which a speaking-tube, hanging close by my chair, communicated.

We had a funny story in connection with that speaking-tube. One day a gentleman, who was at that time a large employer of literary labour, called on me at my office to discuss some matter in which we were mutually interested. It struck me that he had been lunching, and lunching off—or rather on—whisky, and his manner was particularly short and disagreeable.

He had finished his business, and was standing opposite me, when the mouths of the two speaking-tubes hanging by the arms of my chair attracted his attention.

"What are those things?" he asked.

"Speaking-tubes."

"Where do they go to?"

"This one to the messengers' lobby, this to the constables' box in the hall below."

"Ah, pshaw, with your constables!" cried my friend. "Do you mean to tell me there's constables there ready to come to your call? Pooh, nonsense! you're always full of your swagger!" And, muttering other unpleasant remarks indicative of his incredulity, the great man left the room.

As the door shut behind him, I thought I would give him a well-deserved lesson, and I blew down the pipe.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Are you both there?"

"Yes, sir."

"Stop a stout man in a white waistcoat, who is coming down the staircase; take him into the Secretary's lobby, and secure him till I come."

"All right, sir!"

I turned to my work, and two minutes afterwards had a message from the hall-keeper that "they had got the man." Then I went leisurely through the passages and down the staircase, at the bottom of which I found my employer, with a plain-clothes constable on either side of him, holding tightly on to his waist.

"Here's the man, sir!" said the senior of the two officers; "he says it's a mistake; but they always say that, sir, as you know very well."

"Mistake!" roared the irate bibliopole; "what the etcetera is the meaning of all this?"

"Only to let you know in future that I don't swagger in the way you seemed to suppose. You can let him go, men!"

The ordinary method of detecting an official who had fallen

into dishonest ways was by making up a "test" letter, which would fall into his hands and be dealt with by him in the course of his regular duty. In this letter was an enclosure, a coin, or a packet of stamps, which had been previously marked by the testing officer, and could be sworn to in a court of justice. If the letter did not come to hand at the proper time, the suspected man was at once seized and searched, and, in most cases, the contents found upon him.

It was the theory of those versed in such matters that a man had generally availed himself of a good many chances of theft before the suspicions of the authorities were directed towards him; so that the testing officer had to deal with no innocent lamb, but with a sheep possessing a considerable amount of blackness—part natural, part acquired—and for whom the net must consequently be spread in an artistic manner. A good deal of ingenuity had to be exercised in the writing of the letters in which the marked bait was enclosed, as the least suspicion of their genuineness would have induced the thieves to destroy them, and to do away with their contents. Hence the great object was to make the letters read as natural as possible.

I recollect one, which amused me very much at the time. It was addressed to some non-existent person in New Zealand, and was written as though by a brother. It went at some length into family details, all very cleverly and graphically narrated: the death of "dear old grandfather" was touched on with much pathos. It then proceeded, "You will recollect the George II. sixpence which used to hang on his watch-chain, and which we used to play with when children, sitting on his knee? The poor old man perfectly remembered how pleased you used to be with it, and desired it might be forwarded to you, after his death, as a memento. So I enclose it." I am sorry to say the coin proved an efficient bait: the thief took the letter, and we found dear old grandfather's George II. sixpence in his pocket.

I have often thought since that our proceedings in these matters were wholly unconstitutional and highly reprehensible,

though they had the effect of bringing affairs to a head very quickly. After the culprit had been arrested and searched, he was haled off to the Solicitor's office, and there, in the presence of a select few, examined by Mr. William Peacock, who acted as a kind of French *juge d'instruction*, administered the most terrifically searching queries, and probed the man to his very marrow.

Our worthy Solicitor had formed his manner on that of certain of the most notable Old Bailey practitioners of the day, and relied greatly on his powers of easy *badinage* and smart retort. One day I recollect his being completely "stumped" by a man just brought before him.

"Well, sir!" he cried, in his most sarcastic tones—"well, John Smith—I see that's your name—this is a pretty piece of business!"

"Is it, sir?" replied John Smith easily. "I haven't heard the particklars of it yet! Wot's it all about?"

Mr. Peacock collapsed; but in general he conducted this, I believe, wholly illegal preliminary examination with so much adroitness, and got his facts so completely marshalled, that the committal of the unfortunate wretch by the magistrate was a thing of certainty and speed.

When the prisoners were brought up for trial at the Old Bailey Sessions, I used to accompany Mr. Peacock to the court. I had always had a great interest in criminal proceedings, and had frequently spent my shillings and devoted my luncheon-time in visits to the gallery, where I knew one of the door-keepers, who was occasionally employed as an extra waiter at the Alfred Club, where I used frequently to dine. In those early days Messrs. Clarkson and Bodkin were the shining lights of the court, but I recollect nothing of them.

When I attended in a recognised position, always sitting with Mr. Peacock, I made friends with many who have since been leaders of the Bar. Edwin James, who advised me in the Garrick Club case; Serjeant Ballantine; Mr. Hawkins and Serjeant Parry, both in later years retained as leading counsel for

The World, until removed, the one by promotion, the other by death; Mr. Serjeant Shee, Mr. Giffard (now Lord Halsbury), Mr. (now Baron) Huddleston—all would come down occasionally on special retainers; while the court was led by Mr. (afterwards Serjeant) Sleigh, Mr. Ribton, Mr. Clark, Mr. Metcalfe—the two last-named being counsel for Post Office prosecutions; and the Junior Bar was well represented by Mr. Poland, Mr. M. Williams, Mr. Douglas Straight; Mr. Morgan John O'Connell, who represented the Mint in prosecutions; Mr. A. B. Kelly, an excellent descriptive reporter on the *Times;* Mr. Eyre Lloyd, etc.

I soon became known to the Aldermen and Sheriffs, and frequently had the pleasure of lunching with them, and listening with becoming awe to the remarks of the celebrated barristers sitting round the table. Naturally, in the course of my experience as head of the Missing Letter Branch, I was much mixed up with the leading detectives—not so much in employing them, for we relied mainly on our own officers, as in affording them certain facilities for the prosecution of their inquiries.

Of the well-known brothers, John and Daniel Forrester, the successors to the old Bow Street Runners, with the difference that their employment was in the City, I may say *vidi tantum:* I recollect seeing them, very much alike, standing outside the Mansion House; but I was on pleasantly intimate business terms with Michael Haydon, the celebrated City detective, one of the bravest and shrewdest men I have ever met, who is immortalised in Frith's picture of the "Railway Station," and with many other excellent police-officers.

With one of these, Sergeant Hancock, I tried what my old friend, Sir Rowland, would doubtless have characterized as a "dangerous" experiment. Hancock was, and maybe still is, one of the smartest men in the City force. I saw him one afternoon, in plain clothes, lounging round the big drapers' shop-windows in St. Paul's Churchyard, always reckoned good hunting-ground for the swell-mobsmen I satisfied myself that he had not noticed me, and, gradually approaching, got close behind him, and gently slid my hand into the tail-pocket of

his coat. In an instant both his hands were behind him, and had seized mine in a vice-like grip. He turned his head quickly round, and there was a smile of triumph on his face, which faded away and gave place to melancholy disappointment when he recognised his captive. "Too bad of you, Mr. Yates," he grumbled; "I did think I had got one of them that time."

The experiences arising from my position were varied and most interesting, and of no small use to a person engaged as a novelist in the portrayal of human weakness. It would not do to enter upon them here; but there was one episode so strange, so singular, and showing such a misdirection of ability, that I am tempted to narrate it. I recollect Dickens being immensely interested in it at the time. Shortly, the circumstances were these.

A letter, containing a large sum in bank-notes, addressed to a firm in the City, failed to reach its destination. The numbers of the notes were known, payment of them was stopped, all the banks and leading financial houses were warned, and provided with the requisite information on which to act in case any of the notes were presented. Time passed, and nothing was heard of the letter or its contents. Four or five years had elapsed since the date of the theft, when my principal assistant came to me in a state of great excitement, and told me he had just received notice that one of the notes in the —— case had been paid into the Bank of England.

In accordance with our usual custom, we procured the note from the Bank, and commenced to try and trace its career. It was a 10*l.* note, and had been paid into the Bank in a total of several thousands by a firm of woollen-drapers in St. Martin's Lane. They were visited, they examined their books, and declared they had received it from a tailor at Oxford. One of the travelling officers was at once despatched to Oxford with the note, saw the tailor, who recognised the note by his own private mark on it, and said that it had come to him from a former customer, who, while an undergraduate, had got rather

heavily into his debt, and who was "liquidating" by sending his old creditor a small amount whenever he could spare it. Would he give us his customer's name and address? Certainly; his name was Fifay, he was now reading for the Bar, and lived in chambers in Elm Court, Temple.

So far, so good. I thought I would go in person to call on Mr. Fifay, who might require delicate handling. Mr. Fifay was at home, in pleasant chambers, with more signs of the productions of Dumas *fils* and Xavier de Montepin than of Blackstone and Byles visible; a pleasant young fellow, who was glad to see me, knew my name, of course—had read so many of those charming, etc.; in fact, thought he had met me at Jack Stokes's, if not at Tom Styles's. His face changed considerably when I reminded him that I was an official of the Post Office, and informed him of the particular business which brought me to him. He was manifestly taken aback, as I have frequently seen others under similar circumstances: he had evidently entirely forgotten—if he had ever known—anything about my connection with St. Martin's-le-Grand.

Mr. Fifay was a little frightened at first, as most people are under any kind of legal or official examination; but he soon recovered himself when he found how much about his affairs I already knew. He admitted having sent a 10*l.* note to Gowner of Oxford, and that it was the one in question there was very little doubt, as, if the truth must be told, it was the only one he had had for a very long time. Where did he get it? Oh, all on the square. I didn't think he had been "frisking the till," did I? The truth was, Gowner had been dunning like blazes, and he, Fifay, had written to his guardian, Rev. Dr. Primrose, Vicar of Wakefield, who paid him an allowance, for a little advance. The Doctor, in a letter of admonition, had enclosed twenty pounds, "a tenner and two fivers," and the "tenner" Fifay had forwarded to Gowner. "Many thanks; good-morning;" and I left Fifay apparently much relieved that nothing worse had happened to him.

It looked as though the tracing of this note would be a long

and difficult job. Country clergymen do not, unfortunately, as a rule, have very many 10*l.* notes, are not so overburdened with them as to make it difficult to say whence this or that was received; but, on the other hand, they are for the most part poor men of business, wholly unmethodical, and with limp powers of recollection. Dr. Primrose, however, to my great delight, proved a very different kind of person. A little round apple-faced old gentleman, his person and his parsonage were models of neatness and order. Seated at a large old-fashioned *escritoire*, which nearly filled his little study, he listened to all I had to say, and when I ceased he struck in at once:

"Certainly, my dear sir, certainly; on the 8th April"—referring to a memorandum-book he had taken from a drawer—"I sent a 10*l.* note to Charles Fifay."

"And this is the note?" I asked, handing it to him.

"O no, it isn't!" he replied quickly. "I can tell that without looking at it. This is a crumpled, dirty, much-used note; that which I sent to Charles was a brand-new one, which I had just got from Wigglesworth's bank. It was numbered"—and he referred again to the memorandum-book—"'$\frac{S}{V}$26,708: London, May 29, 1867;' and this one—bless me! this is '$\frac{K}{C}$79,234: London, March 8, 1859.' Quite a different thing."

"You're certain you remember the number?" I asked somewhat suspiciously.

"Positive! Look for yourself at my entry when I sent the money to Charles."

I looked, and satisfied myself there was no mistake—there could be no collusion; and for the time we were completely at fault. Other bank-notes, however, belonging to the same parcel soon began to come in, and from what was learned during the tracing of them an old and much-respected letter-carrier, on the Fleet Street walk, was arrested on suspicion, and was committed for trial. Before he was charged at the Old Bailey he made a clean breast of it, confessed his crime, and explained his *modus operandi*.

It appears that he originally stole the banker's letter, and took it to his home. But he had heard so much talk in the Office about the way in which such robberies were detected, the manner in which bank-notes were traced, etc., that he was frightened to make any immediate use of his ill-gotten spoil, and kept the bundle of notes, securely locked up in a box, for years. At length the time came when he thought he might profit by his temerity, and he adopted a remarkably ingenious scheme. He would select certain letters which, from his manipulation of them during the sorting process, he imagined contained bank-notes, and lay them aside. At night he conveyed them home, opened them, took out the bank-notes which they contained, replacing them by notes of equal value taken from the long-since stolen bundle, sealed the letters again, and took them to the Office next day to be forwarded to their destination. In this fashion he was gradually working off his stock of "stopped" notes, and making up a little sheaf of more serviceable ones in their place, when he was detected, and sent into penal servitude.

I remained for nearly ten years at the head of the Missing Letter Branch, and thought I should remain there until I had become disabled, or until I had served the necessary number of years for securing a pension, when the acquisition by the Government of the telegraphic system of the country most unexpectedly influenced the whole course of my future life.

The suggestion of this gigantic addition to the regular work hitherto performed by the Post Office Department had originated with Mr. Scudamore, and, when sanctioned by Parliament, had been handed over to him to carry out. The history of that extraordinary time has yet to be written, but certainly not by me, as my share in the carrying out of the scheme was infinitesimal; but when it is written, the public will read with wonder of the desperate unflagging energy by which it was carried through by the man who had planned it, and his devoted band of followers, who sat up night after

night, denying themselves rest, comfort, almost food, in order that the compact with the Government might be duly executed.

From my personal friendship with Mr. Scudamore I knew a good deal of what was going on; but I had no hand in the affair, and never thought I should have. One day, however, very soon after the telegraphs had been taken over by the Post Office, I was sent for by Mr. Scudamore. He spoke to me in the kindest manner, telling me he felt sure I must be somewhat wearied of the duties of the Missing Letter Branch after such long performance of them, and hinted it was not improbable that before many months certain sweeping changes might be made in the administration of the Office, under which I might find myself shelved. Of my ability, he was good enough to say, there was no doubt; but the selection of those to be "compulsorily retired" would rest with Mr. Tilley, the Secretary, with whom I was no special favourite; and that, possibly, Mr. Tilley might not be sorry of an opportunity for displacing me in favour of some one whose "zeal for the service"—a convenient official phrase—was more conspicuously manifest. In truth, I had had one or two conflicts with Mr. Tilley, in which, notwithstanding the weight of his official position, I had not been wholly unsuccessful.

Mr. Tilley was a shrewd, caustic, clever man, bred in the Post Office service, and knowing it thoroughly; by no means a crotcheteer, but, with his public office experience, tempered by plenty of worldly knowledge, and as unimpressionable as an oyster. An excellent public servant, had he not been a *sic volo, sic jubeo* gentleman—one who never allowed anything or anyone to stand in his way; who was accustomed to do as he liked without being called upon for his reasons; and with whom, as I have stated, I, not being entirely willing to prostrate myself in order that I might be ridden over roughshod, had more than once come into collision.

I had led the mill-horse life for so long—I had been jogging easily round and round for so many years—that I had never

contemplated the arrival of a time when I might have to surrender my post, and with it the 500*l.* a year which, though but a portion of my income, was a certainty.

No such contingency was, however, immediately at hand. Mr. Scudamore told me he had a plan for effectually utilizing my services in a way that would be pleasant to myself and valuable to the department. The Government, it appeared, had in contemplation an enormous extension of telegraph business. Under the private companies comparatively few places, and those only towns of fair size, had telegraphic intercommunication; but now that the affair had been acquired by the Post Office it was intended that every place of sufficient importance to be a money-order office should also be made a centre for the receipt and despatch of telegrams. This extension of business would necessitate the erection of poles and the carrying of many thousand miles of wire over public and private property; and it was to obtain the consent of the various corporate bodies and private landowners to the Government's amiable trespass on their domains that my services were about to be called into requisition.

Mr. Scudamore laughed as he showed me the minute to the Postmaster-General, in which it was set forth that the person to fill the appointment should be a gentleman of pleasant manners, possessing a certain knowledge of the world, and assured me that I was the very man to meet the requirements. Then he gave me twenty-four hours to turn the matter over, and I retired.

I at once commenced making inquiries from some of the higher officials in the Telegraph Department as to the details of my proposed duties, and all I learned was most satisfactory. I found I should be practically my own master, taking a certain district at a time, and working in it until I had exhausted my schedule of persons on whom I was to wait, and then moving on elsewhere; that I should get rid of the long familiar life of the Office, with its stated hours of attendance and its jog-trot routine; that I should necessarily have plenty

of leisure time in which to pursue my literary labours; and that I could always take my wife for my companion whenever she was so inclined. Moreover, I felt convinced, more from my old friend Scudamore's manner than from anything he actually said, that he thought it very much for my interest that I should accept the proffered berth; and as this view was ratified at home, the next morning I signified my thankful assent.

And so, though I was still an "officer of the department," my old servitude at St. Martin's-le-Grand came to an end after twenty-three years, and I entered upon a new official career. The necessity for punctual arrival, with its concomitant hateful "attendance-book," the daily dreary grind, the perpetual attachment to the "desk's dull wood"—all were abolished for a time at least, and, as it proved, for ever.

My duties were pleasant, and thoroughly congenial. The engineer, in proposing a certain extension of telegraphic accommodation, would report that difficulty might possibly be experienced in "getting consent," as we used technically to call it, for the erection of poles or carrying the wires over certain property. This might mean on public roads or private lands, across gardens, through streets, or over chimneys. I was then despatched to see how the difficulties could be smoothed. I took up my quarters in the place, harangued mayors and corporations in council assembled; presented myself before local magnates in their libraries, on their lawns, even in the midst of their shooting-parties when time pressed; sat with old ladies, and dissipated their fears of the wires proving lightning-conductors, and importing the "electric fluid" into their bedrooms; persuaded invalids that the sighing of the wind through the wires, instead of being an annoyance, had an Æolian harp-like quality of soothing; laughed, chaffed, persuaded, cajoled, threatened—when necessary; but generally got my way.

I had some very curious experiences, and in recalling them I am often astonished at my own audacity. We had a "diffi-

culty," of which I now forget the details, with the city of Cork; and I was despatched to attend a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, which had been specially invoked, with instructions to be firm. There was a large gathering in a handsome hall, and the feeling against the Government seemed to run very high. The debate was opened by some of the principal merchants, and there were reporters who took down every word. When my turn came I stated what the Post Office required to be done in return for what it was doing; and when, after several speeches strongly condemning my suggestions, they were unanimously refused, I quietly told them that they had done a bad day's work; for the Government, finding its efforts thwarted, would certainly attempt no further extension of the telegraph system in Ireland. The row that ensued was appalling. I made my way out of the place amidst hootings; the local journals indulged in the fiercest diatribes; and two days after, Mr. McCarthy Downing, then member for the city, rising in his seat in the House of Commons, asked the Government whether I had authority for the threat I had held out.

At a fashionable watering-place in Devonshire there was considerable opposition to our carrying the wires through the streets; and at a meeting of the Town Council, which I attended, the scheme was fiercely denounced, one of the strongest malcontents being, as I discovered, the ground landlord of the post-office building. In my speech in reply I alluded to this fact, saying I felt inclined to upbraid one who ought to have been on our side with Cæsar's words, "Et tu, Brute!" The gentleman in question immediately rose, and asked the mayor whether such expressions were in order.

One of my funniest experiences was in attending the Local Board of a little town on the Thames, where I was told we should be hotly opposed, as we proposed to take the wires along a pretty road leading from the station, on one side of which ran the garden of a wealthy lady, whose agent was to be my chief adversary. He was pointed out to me when I entered

the little room, where perhaps fifteen people were assembled—a very stout little man, with a roll of paper in his hand. He was evidently much excited, and at once demanded that "the inspector," as he would persist in calling me, should "lay his proposition before the meeting." I accordingly made a brief statement, during the delivery of which the little man fidgeted and fumed, but said nothing. When I sat down, one or two of the tradesmen, after exchanging a nod with my friend, asked me some questions which had evidently been pre-arranged.

Then the little man rose, and commenced to denounce the scheme which I had propounded as one which would overwhelm with ruin and confusion their lovely and peaceful village, so well known to, and so sought after by, the angler, the oarsman, the tired and weary citizen, who flew thither for rest. After a good deal in this strain, the little man stopped and mopped his forehead; then, striding across the room, he bore down upon me, and, waving his roll of paper close under my nose, cried: "And who are you who would, unbidden and uninvited, proceed to force your posts and wires down our throats? Minion of the Government! I defy you!" Then he struck an attitude, and was greeted with subdued cheers by his friends. There was no chaff in this, it was all meant perfectly seriously. I was afraid my little friend had expressed the wishes of the meeting, and I retired covered with ignominy.

One more anecdote of my experiences in those pleasant days. A gentleman, a large landowner in Lancashire, had written to the Post Office complaining that in some recent extension of the telegraphs a trèspass had been committed on his property, and desiring that the matter might be immediately set right. The tone of the letter was exceedingly offensive and dictatorial, and it was evident that he was a very ugly customer. The telegraph engineer reported that though a little modification of the selected route might be made, to clear off entirely from the complainant's land would involve a considerable *détour*; and, under all the circumstances, it was considered

advisable that I should go down and see what could be done with our obstreperous customer in a personal interview.

I did not receive much encouragement from the landlord of the inn at the town near Mr. P——'s estate, where I put up for the night before paying my visit, who described him as being a "hoigh-handed un"—whatever that might mean—as very proud and arrogant, and as having all these evil qualities inflamed and intensified by constant illness. This did not promise well; and I received much the same account from the man who drove me over in a gig the next morning. However, I was in for it; and, on arrival, I walked boldly up the steps and set the bell clanging.

I gave my card to the servant who appeared, telling him to take it to Mr. P——, and say that I had come down from London to see him on the subject upon which he had written to the Post Office. The man looked very doubtful, and told me Mr. P—— was ill, and never saw anybody.

Was there a Mrs. P——, I asked, who could represent her husband? Oh yes, there were; but she "was wusser nor him," the man said—not in illness, but in temper. I could not go away without having seen somebody, so I told the man to take the card to his master, and bring me some message in reply. He returned speedily, bidding me wait where I was, and Mr. P—— would come to me. So I lounged round the big stone hall and examined the family portraits.

Presently a door opened, and the servant reappeared, convoying an elderly lady with a flaming face. I stood at "attention" and made a salaam; but she took no notice of me, and went straight to her carriage, which had drawn up at the steps. About ten minutes after, the door opened again, and a wheel-chair was pushed in by another servant, who retired at once.

The occupant of the chair was a big man, who had been handsome, and who still preserved his *distingué* looks, though his features were a good deal distorted by constant pain. He had keen black eyes and a bristling grey beard, and a general

air of great *hauteur*. He turned slowly round to where I stood, and called to me, "Come here, sir," very much as though I were a dog, and then asked me what I wanted.

I referred him to my card, which he was twisting in his thin bony fingers, and was just beginning a statement of the object of my visit, when he broke out into the most desperate tirade against the Government, against me, against the telegraphs, and almost against everything. Why the etcetera had the Government meddled in the matter? The private companies did the thing well, and in a gentlemanly manner, without interfering with the rights of property; but this etcetera Liberal Government wanted to grab everything. What the etcetera did I mean by coming to his house and demanding to see him? Didn't I consider it an etcetera liberty? Because he did; and he'd be etcetera'd if he'd put up with it, etc.

I kept perfectly quiet, though I felt very hot and uncomfortable, until Mr. P—— stopped for sheer want of breath, and then I struck in. I told him that he was probably the best judge of how he should receive any one in his own house; but that such a reception, in the course of a tolerably wide experience, was a novelty to me; that it was not for me to say anything about his diatribes against the Government, and that, as for myself, I was there merely as an official sent on a mission to discharge certain duties; but that, as I was perfectly certain the Postmaster-General would not like me to stay to be further sworn at and insulted, I would take my leave.

I was moving towards the door, when the old man, looking very faint and spent after his recent exertion, motioned me to him, and said, in a weak voice, "You are quite right, sir, and I have to ask your pardon. I forgot myself, and let my passion get the better of me. I am very sorry for having caused you pain; but I am an old man, and I have been desperately ill. When I recover, in a minute, I will talk to you." He touched my hand gently with his, and then lay back, gasping for breath.

Of course I was considerably moved at this, and I at once

begged him to think no more of it; that I could perfectly understand his state; that I would wait his convenience, and do everything I could to arrange the business on which I had come down in accordance with his wishes.

He bowed his head in thanks, and touched my hand again; then he sat up in the chair—he had revived considerably while I had been speaking—and, to my intense astonishment, he burst out into loud cries of "Yates! Yates!" For a minute I thought he had gone mad. I tried to speak, but he stopped me, and cried "Yates!" again, as loudly as he could.

I was relieved to find that Yates, who speedily put in an appearance, was the farm-bailiff, who was despatched with me to the scene of the trespass, and with whom I soon entered into amicable relations. On my return to the house, Mr. P-- approved of all that had been settled between the two Yateses; I found luncheon laid for me; and my host had his chair wheeled to my side, and proved an agreeable companion.

My experiences, on the whole, were remarkably pleasant and enjoyable; and while leading a very agreeable life during the two years, I may fairly claim to have "done the State some service."

I was nearly always courteously received, and in by far the greater number of my visits I managed to carry my point. In this result I was a good deal assisted by the fact that at that time such popularity as I had gained as a novelist was at its height. I was always immensely amused at watching the surprise which people would exhibit on reading my name on the card which I handed them, and then, looking in the corner, would see "Telegraph Department, General Post Office," inscribed there. Their faces would wear the same kind of expression which is displayed by travellers in a railway-carriage when a well-known actor gets in. Some would ask me if I were any relation to myself; others wondered whether they really had the pleasure, etc. And in every case where it came out that I was really their friend of the circulating library or

the railway bookstall, the fact not merely acted as an introduction, but, I am sure, frequently stood me in good stead.

I made some very pleasant acquaintances, and paid some very pleasant visits: one to Lord Dartmouth, at Patshull, near Wolverhampton, where I was hospitably entertained; and one to the notorious Lord Lonsdale, a very naughty old nobleman, who was the original of Major Pendennis's noble friend, Lord Colchicum, and Mr. Disraeli's Lord Eskdale. His lordship had represented to the Office that the recent erection of some poles and wires on Shap Fell, a wild and desolate moorland district, had been very destructive to his grouse, which in their flight, more especially in the dark, hurled themselves against the almost invisible wires, and were killed or maimed.

He made an appointment to receive me on a certain day at Lowther Castle, and was most courteous and genial. He was a very old man at that time, considerably past eighty, and a prisoner to his chair, but quite bright and intelligent. He fully understood and at once accepted a proposition which I made him in regard to shifting the poles; and when I rose, my business ended, begged me to sit again. He had ordered luncheon for me, he said; and if I had never seen the castle, he thought I should like to go over it; and he should much like a chat with me about the Office, for he had once—long before my time—been Postmaster-General.

I had forgotten that circumstance, but Lord Lonsdale had forgotten nothing. He sat by me while I had my luncheon, asking clever questions and making very sharp comments on the people who had been in the G.P.O. in his day, and some of whom still remained. Then he asked me if I were related to "his old friend Yates of the Adelphi;" and when I told him, he had a long series of reminiscences to go through, all most amusing. I was afterwards shown over the castle by the steward, and took my leave of Lord Lonsdale late in the afternoon, after a delightful day.

The old nobleman died soon after this; and there is a curious, and I believe authentic, anecdote connected with his

death. He had long possessed a wonderful dinner set of Sèvres china, which had been stolen in Paris during the Revolution, and subsequently purchased by him, of which three pieces were wanting. For years and years he sought for these three pieces without success. At last he heard that they were in a sale at Christie's. He sent a friend to purchase them, and, being very old and feeble, waited at the door in his brougham. The three pieces were purchased, Lord Lonsdale took them home, and died that night.

During those two years, in the discharge of my duty, I travelled over a large portion of England and Ireland, Scotland not coming within my province. I generally arranged, always with a due regard to the public interest, that my work should lie in the large provincial towns, or their vicinity, during the winter, while in the lovely spring, summer, and autumn weather I took to the country districts. I am glad to think that my exertions were recognised and gave satisfaction. I had the best of friends in my chief, Scudamore, and the kindest of allies in the engineer of the south-western district of England, Mr. W. H. Preece, now known as one of our foremost electricians, and in Mr. T. H. Sanger, head of the Telegraph Office in Ireland, one of the most genial generous creatures that ever drew breath, who died a year or two ago. To these two friends I owe a deep debt of gratitude, for under their auspices I was pleasantly though continuously employed, and I had a most delightful time.

For weeks I had my head-quarters at Plymouth, comfortable rooms at the Duke of Cornwall Hotel, whence I rambled all over the lovely neighbourhood, Port Eliot and Saltash, with excursions up the Tamar and the Dart, and further afield to Mevagissy and St. Ives and St. Austell and the queer little fishing village of Looe, to Menheniot and Scorrier and Liskeard.

Over the wild and bleak Dartmoor I took the wires to Princetown, the oasis of building in the midst of the barren desert, and into the great convict prison close by.

To Boscastle, and all the adjacent Arthur's land, I was the pioneer of telegraphy, staying at Mrs. Scott's quaint and excellent hotel, with the old figurehead from the man-of-war erected in the garden, and the most amusing visitors'-book, wherein I recollect a gentleman gravely records his satisfaction at having, after a protracted perusal of many pages, at last found a person who will give two *m*'s to "accommodation," and the landlady's stories of Douglas Cook, the original editor of the *Saturday Review*, who had a house in Tintagel, which he occasionally visited, and who is buried in the place.

A change of head-quarters to Penzance, with visits to the Lizard and the Land's End, an inspection of the Longships Lighthouse, and a good deal of yachting in Mount's Bay; a run over to Helston, to see the celebrated "Flurry" or Flowery Fair, with its quaint custom of the entire population dancing in and out through the open doors of all the houses, which gave scope for an amusing article in *All the Year Round*.

For I did not neglect my regular literary work during this time. That would have been impossible, not merely for the absolute necessity of earning what it brought in, but from the fact that engagements had been previously entered upon, from which it would have been impossible to escape. So, giving the day, from immediately after breakfast till dinner, to my official excursions, I rose early and retired late; and, having my indefatigable secretary Simpson with me, I was enabled to get through a large amount of dictated work, which he reduced into longhand during my absence the next day. Besides very many occasional articles for magazines and newspapers, I wrote two entire novels while on this tour—*Castaway*, which I began on the Derby Day, 1871—the first Derby I had missed for twenty years—in the pretty house belonging to, and standing in, the grounds of the Castle Hotel, Linton, and the best scene in which I wrote in the Railway Hotel, Killarney, with the clatter of its *table d'hôte* in the room below; and *Nobody's Fortune*, the scene of which is nearly wholly laid in Cornwall, the names of the *dramatis personæ* being names of stations on

the Cornwall Railway—it was my frequent habit to name my characters out of *Bradshaw's Guide*—and which was mainly written in a big bedroom at the top of the Duke of Cornwall Hotel, in Plymouth.

Pleasant it was that the stern behests of duty took me, in the early days of a lovely August, into Lakeland, and kept me there—now at Ullswater, now at Keswick, now at Windermere, where my brother-in-law was vicar at the time—for nearly six weeks.

Earlier in that year I had a long spell in Ireland. I was often called over to Dublin, where my old friends Nugent Robinson; John Harris, lessee of the Theatre Royal; and Dr. Tisdall, Chancellor of Christchurch, made me very welcome, and where I would meet such charming companions as Father Healey, Professor Mahaffy, and Dr. Nedley. But this time I made a much longer stay—had several days at Killarney, the neighbourhood of which I thoroughly examined, under the superintendence of Mr. Currie, who then managed the Railway Hotel, and his head-guide, Stephen Spillane; and went on a most interesting excursion through the wild parts of Kerry to Valentia, where I had a day in the Atlantic cable-house, and obtained enough information and grasp of "local colour" to enable me to lay there the scene of action in the next Christmas number of *All the Year Round*, which I called "Slaves of the Lamp."

There was a good deal to do, too, in Galway about that time; and, as the town was not particularly inviting, I made my head-quarters at Salthill, a village on the sea, a few miles off, where the accommodation was quaint and simple in the extreme, and where, on a Sunday morning, all the men and boys of the neighbourhood, numbering, perhaps, a couple of hundred, bathed from the shore. They mostly only paddled within their depth, and expressed great surprise at the distance which I, a strong and practised swimmer in those days, achieved.

But the pleasant times, like all other times, pleasant or unpleasant, had to come to an end. After two years' most happy

wanderings I found my occupation gone. The purchase of the telegraphs, and the manner in which the business had been carried out in all its ramifications, had cost far more than the Government had originally intended to spend over the affair, and the Treasury positively forbade our entertaining the idea of any further extension of empire or expenditure of capital. Economy and retrenchment were the order of the day, and I received instructions to wind up all the work I had in hand as quickly as possible, and to enter upon nothing further.

I ran up to town directly I received this communication, and went straight to the G.P.O. to seek advice from Scudamore. The official storm, which shortly afterwards burst upon him with such fury, was then only rumbling in the distance; but though I have no doubt he knew perfectly well what was coming, and although he was beset on every side by worries which would have tried the nerve or confused the sense of most men, he was too good a friend not, even in the midst of this whirling excitement, to have given a thought to the fortunes of those in whom he was interested. He saw me at once, told me he felt convinced I should come to him; that he had, therefore, thought my case out, and was ready with his advice. There was no further employment for me in the Telegraph Department, he told me plainly; there would be no further extension of the system for a very long time, and consequently no further "consents" to gain; after the life of comparative freedom which I had led for so many months, a return to the ordinary routine of a Government office would probably be very irksome to me.

I confessed so much, but what was I to do?

Scudamore did not hesitate; he advised me to resign my appointment, and ask for superannuation. The change in the constitution of the Secretary's office, which he had mentioned two years before, was now imminent; the position which I had previously held was about to be abolished, as part of that large measure of reorganization, and that would enable me to count ten extra years in my claim for a pension, the amount of which

was regulated by the number of years of service. I might serve an additional ten years, Scudamore pointed out, and then only be superannuated in the same sum which I should now receive —now, when I was in the prime of life (forty-one), with all my faculties undimmed, and with my command of the literary market at its best.

Scudamore urged his point with that wonderfully magnetic enthusiasm so peculiarly his: but at first I felt too much frightened to go with him, to look at the future through his roseate glasses. I had always been accustomed thoroughly to indorse Sir Walter Scott's description of literature as a good stick to help you along, but a bad crutch to lean upon entirely for support; and now for nearly five-and-twenty years I had always had the comforting reflection that, come what might, as long as the country and the Bank of England lasted, there was always a certain sum, though not a very large one, at my disposal on the first of every month. This sum I should have, not indeed to give up altogether, but to see considerably reduced; for the proposed pension, even under the exceptional circumstances named by my friend, would assuredly not amount to anything like one half of the salary, and all the rest of the outgoing money must be provided by my work.

Of course for many years by far the larger portion of my income had been the produce of my pen, and I had never had any difficulty in placing anything I wrote. But would that be the case when, with all my time at my disposal, the supply would be so vastly increased? The ranks of the novelists were swelling year by year; already the halcyon days of large payments were past, and publishers were declaring they could not give their former prices, owing to the increase of competition. Could I go again into journalistic harness, special-reporting, reviewing, dramatic criticism? and, even if I could, should I get the employment? I was no longer in the first freshness of youth, and many men of rising reputation were pressing forward and making their presence in the field fully recognised by me and my coevals.

Reflections such as these, which it was impossible not to admit, made me look very serious during the domestic conferences which were held during the two succeeding days. But my good fortune did not desert me in this, as it proved, most important moment; and, feeling perfectly certain that Scudamore had not tendered his advice hurriedly or without due consideration, I determined on following it.

My application, indorsed with the Secretary's recommendation, was speedily sent in to the Treasury; and, on a bright morning in March 1872, exactly twenty-five years after I entered the service, as I opened my letters at an hotel in Falmouth, I found one among them informing me that my prayer was granted, and that I was a free man, with a pension of about 200*l.* a year.

In the following June I was entertained at dinner at Willis's Rooms by nearly a hundred of my old colleagues, with Frank Scudamore in the chair; to my great delight, several of my private friends, among them Sala and Parkinson, were invited guests, and wishes for my future prosperity were most eloquently and genially invoked.

I must not close this chapter without further reference to the two members of the Post Office service who are best known to the public, Rowland Hill and Anthony Trollope, with both of whom I was more or less associated; and, as a bystander is said in the old proverb to see most of the game, it is probable that I, who interfered with neither, had better opportunities for observing their various peculiarities than if I had occupied a less subordinate position.

The two men cordially hated each other. Trollope admits it in his *Autobiography*. "And then there were the feuds—such delicious feuds! I was always an anti-Hillite, acknowledging, indeed, the great thing which Sir Rowland Hill had done for the country, but believing him to be entirely unfit to manage men or to arrange labour. It was a pleasure to me to

differ from him on all occasions; and, looking back now, I think that, in all such differences, I was right."*

Sir Rowland Hill was far too cautious and reserved ever to put his likes or dislikes into print. But he hated Trollope very cordially, and could not avoid showing it when they were brought into contact. On such occasions there was a fund of amusement for any bystander who knew what was going on. Trollope would bluster and rave and roar, blowing and spluttering like a grampus; while the pale old gentleman opposite him, sitting back in his armchair and regarding his antagonist furtively under his spectacles, would remain perfectly quiet until he saw his chance, and then deliver himself of the most unpleasant speech he could frame in the hardest possible tone.

I recollect one occasion when I had attended a meeting of the Surveyors, which was held in the summer-time, at that good old-fashioned inn the Red Lion at Henley, for the purpose of laying before them some views of Sir Rowland's. I had secret instructions that if these views were controverted I was, on the authority of the Secretary, to declare the meeting adjourned, to reassemble at the General Post Office under Sir Rowland's chairmanship. As I expected, the Surveyors were

* My friend and former colleague, Mr. Pearson Hill, Sir Rowland's son, on the appearance of Trollope's *Autobiography*, sent me the copy of a letter addressed by A. T. to Sir Rowland, on the latter's retirement from the service in 1864. In this letter Trollope says: "I cannot let your resignation from office pass with assuring you of my thorough admiration for the great work of your life. I have regarded you for many years as one of the essential benefactors not only of your own country, but of all the civilized world. I think the thing you have done has had in it more of general utility than any other measure which has been achieved in my time." Mr. Hill seems to see in this praise either a refutation of the "anti-Hillite" statement or a piece of insincere and fulsome flattery; but I think the sentiments expressed in statement and letter are compatible. I am more with Mr. Hill in his remarks, as an indication of Trollope's value as a public servant, "that he declares promotion by merit to be a 'damnable system' (vol. ii. p. 118); and by his own showing he left the service because, under that system, even when administered by his own brother-in-law, he could not get the position he wanted."

by no means unanimous, Trollope as usual being loudest in opposition; so I proceeded to act upon my instructions. These were received with much discontent; but my orders were imperative: I dismissed the meeting, and the next day the Surveyors—some very sulky, none very pleased—assembled in the Secretary's room at St. Martin's.

I had told the old gentleman exactly what had occurred, and I knew from his snort of defiance as he listened, and from the battle-light gleaming behind his spectacles, that he probably meant mischief. He got his first shot at Trollope early in the discussion: Anthony burst in with an interruption; but Hill, pointing at him with his pencil, said at once: "One at a time, Mr. Trollope, one at a time, if you please; another gentleman is speaking now." And later on, when some one had been talking of "official phraseology," the old gentleman made a great hit. "One of you gentlemen," he said, "has used the words 'official phraseology.' Now official phraseology is a good thing in its way, but very often it by no means describes the actually existing state of affairs. For instance, in writing to you gentlemen, I am accustomed to describe myself in official phraseology as 'Your obedient humble servant,' whereas"—and here he sat up and glared round through his glasses—"*whereas I'm nothing of the sort!*"

Rowland Hill had a peculiarly effective way of saying a caustic and unpleasant thing: voice and manner lent their aid to send the shaft rankling home. "I'm afraid I must take the blame of that, Sir Rowland," said one of his chief subordinates to him. "You must indeed, for you've deserved it," was his rejoinder. "I should be very sorry to see you adopt such a measure, Sir Rowland," said another. "You had better reserve the expression of your regret until it's called for," remarked the old gentleman, in chilling tone.

Sir Rowland Hill was one of the least eccentric members of a very strange family, and in his oddity there was always a good deal of common sense. A family story illustrates this. In his later years—he lived to be eighty-four—he had to be very par-

ticular as to his diet, and one day, when the doctor had ordered him to take half a cutlet for dinner, he fancied Lady Hill in her kindness had helped him too bountifully.

"The doctor said half a cutlet, my dear," he remonstrated.

"Well, my dear, that is only half."

"I think you've been too generous, my dear; this is the larger——"

"I can assure you, my dear, it is the exact half."

After a moment's hesitation Sir Rowland said, "If that be so, my dear, perhaps you won't mind giving me *the other half!*"

He occasionally said a dry thing very amusingly. My wife and I were calling at Hampstead one Sunday: the weather was rough, "and," said Lady Hill, "the wind is so cold that our doctor positively forbade our going to church this morning." "There was no occasion for any particular peremptoriness in his instructions to *me* in that regard," muttered Sir Rowland, who was standing beside me.

Throughout our relations at the Post Office he was invariably kind to me; and when some time after he had retired I asked him for his autograph, he sent it me in very pleasant form. "I am reading your *Land at Last*," he said in his letter, "and enjoy it much, as I have enjoyed all your other novels."

Sir Rowland lived for some fifteen years after his retirement from the Post Office, and died, where he had long resided, at Bertram House, Hampstead; one of the latest acts of his life being to fight and overthrow a design for building a small-pox hospital close by. He enjoyed novel-reading and converse with his brothers and a few intimate friends. He could always be drawn into discussing questions connected with his old "shop," and never allowed that any suggestion about postal affairs was of any use unless it were to be found in what he called "my pa-amphlet," *i.e.*, *Post Office Reform; its Importance and Practicability;* the pamphlet in which he first astonished the official and commercial world by setting forth his views regarding a uniform rate of postage.

He was cautious and shrewd to the last. Three years before his death I saw him, and obtained his permission for my friend Mr. Becker to visit and make a pen-portrait of him, to be included in the series "Celebrities at Home" in *The World*. Sir Rowland consented, received Mr. Becker very kindly, and, aided by Mr. Pearson Hill, supplied the visitor with much interesting information. They showed him all the curiosities connected with the early postal *régime:* the block stamps, the Mulready envelopes, the caricatures of R. H., and the fulminating placards with which town was posted at the time of the "Sunday labour" question.

But when the old gentleman saw his visitor taking a note of the "portable property"—the K.C.B.'s ribbon and star, the silver box enclosing the freedom of the Fishmongers' Company, the salver from Liverpool, wine-coolers from Glasgow, candelabra from Wolverhampton, and other valuable testimonials—he became alarmed. "Pearson," he said to his son, "it would be as well if Mr. Becker did not mention in his article the exact locality where these things are kept, or he might inadvertently attract the attention of burglars to the house!"

It is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast to Rowland Hill than Anthony Trollope, physically—save that both were bald and spectacled—and mentally. One small, pale, and, with the exception of a small scrap of whisker, closely shaven; the other big, broad, fresh-coloured, and bushy-bearded: one calm and freezing, the other bluff and boisterous; one cautious and calculating, weighing well every word before utterance, and then only choosing phrases which would convey his opinion, but would give no warmth to its expression; the other scarcely giving himself time to think, but spluttering and roaring out an instantly-formed opinion couched in the very strongest of terms. "I differ from you entirely! What was it you said?" he roared out once to the speaker who preceded him at a discussion of Surveyors.

Trollope was very little known in the London office, whence he had been drafted many years previously, and he certainly

was not popular among the subordinates of his district. He was a very kind-hearted man; but with persons in the position of clerks in small offices, letter-carriers, etc., manner has a great effect, and Trollope's manner was desperately against him. I do not believe that any man of his time was more heartily, more thoroughly, more unselfishly charitable; and he not merely did not let his left hand know what his right hand did in such matters, but he would savagely rap the knuckles of any hand meddling with his affairs. The larger portion of that collection of books of which he speaks with such affection in the *Autobiography* was purchased to relieve the necessities of an old friend's widow, who never had an idea but that she was doing Trollope a kindness in letting him buy them.

Trollope was as "thorough" in his Post Office work as he was in his literary labours. His declarations of affection for his official employment are frequent in the *Autobiography;* and in a speech which he delivered at a meeting held at St. Martin's-le-Grand in 1858, to establish a Post Office Library and Literary Institution, he said, "We belong to the Civil Service. That service has not always been spoken of in the terms I firmly believe it deserves. It has been spoken of as below those other posts to which the ambition of Englishmen attaches itself; but my belief is that it should offer as fair an object of ambition as any other service, and that the manner in which the duties are generally performed by most of the departments with which I am acquainted deserves that the men belonging to it should not be placed in a lower position than those in any other service. I myself *love* the Post Office. I have belonged to it ever since I left school. I work with all my heart, and every one else should do the same; then they will rise with the department, and the Civil Service will rise to the level of any other profession, whether it be the Church, the Bar, the Army, or the Navy."

His lecture on the "Civil Service as a Profession," delivered before his colleagues, and afterwards printed in the *Cornhill Magazine*, was to the same effect. Nevertheless, he resigned his situation in the Post Office at the age of fifty-two, when he

was in full bodily and mental vigour, thus cutting himself off from any chance of a pension, which is not granted, save in the case of illness or under abolition of office, to any person under sixty. This step was partly the result of pique, as he himself allows, from his having failed to obtain the post of Assistant-Secretary, then vacant, for which he had applied. Such an appointment would have been worse than fatal. The proverbial bull in the china-shop would have been a tame and harmless animal compared to Trollope in the Assistant-Secretary's chair.

But the real truth was, his love for the Post Office had long been evaporating, and was nearly gone: there were no more "delicious feuds," for Rowland Hill had retired, and Frederick was mild and inoffensive, and not worth fighting; and the then Secretary was Mr. Tilley, Trollope's own brother-in-law. Moreover, Trollope was a very different man from the unknown clerk to whom the Post Office was all in all: he was, if not in the first, first in the second, flight of novelists of the day; he was —what he had never been in his office—popular in certain circles, notably at the Garrick Club. He would have more leisure for clubs, hunting, and whist, and at the same time be earning more money; and he would have opportunities for foreign and colonial travel, and consequent book-making, such as he never would have had again in the department, where his official trips had already been much discussed. He, too, lived for fifteen years after his retirement a more enjoyable life than is given to most of us, and all the happiness in which he right honestly deserved.

It has often been noticed that Trollope had a very poor notion of humour, either in his works or in private life. He once attempted a professedly funny story, *The Struggles of Brown, Jones, and Robinson*, but it was a ghastly failure, as he admits; nor was he a good *raconteur* or conversationalist. He told one story, however, remarkably well, and it always struck me as one of the funniest I ever heard. So I give it, confirmatory as it also is of what I have previously said regarding the eccentricity of some of the members of the Blank family.

I happened to be keeping a diary the last time I heard it, and I give the extract:

"*Monday, 18th February*, 1878.—Escott gave a dinner to-night at the Thatched House Club, which turned out very pleasantly. Present: Colonel Colley, C.B., Lord Lytton's private secretary, home from India on leave for a few weeks; J. A. Froude, Anthony Trollope, Major Arthur Griffiths, Dr. Quain, J. C. Parkinson, and myself. . . . . Trollope told a remarkably funny story about a dinner given him by F. Blank. It appears that F. Blank and Trollope, who while in the Post Office together never agreed, had a tremendous row, and at the subsequent *rapprochement* Blank asked Trollope to dine with him at Hampstead at five o'clock. Trollope went; found the dining-room full of ladies, twenty or thirty of them, and himself and Blank the only men present. Dinner was announced, and Trollope went to offer his arm to Mrs. Blank, when he was cut short by Blank, who said, 'The ladies have already dined.' He and Trollope accordingly went down together to the dining-room, where, at one end of the table, there was part of a cold leg of mutton, at the other a salad—nothing else on the table. F. Blank told Trollope to sit down opposite the mutton, which he, being very hungry, did. Blank seated himself opposite the salad, and commenced devouring it, taking no mutton. There were no potatoes or any other vegetable, and nothing to drink, absolutely nothing of any kind—no water, beer, or wine. When Blank had finished the salad, and Trollope had disposed of two huge helps of mutton, Blank said, 'Shall we join the ladies?' and they went upstairs. In the dining-room they found the ladies seated in a huge circle, with a chair in the middle of it, into which Trollope was inducted. Blank said, 'The ladies will now proceed to interrogate you upon various matters;' which they did."

I saw but little of Trollope during the last years of his life. I believe he disapproved of "society journalism," and he certainly refused to pose as a "Celebrity at Home." "I allow that your articles are cleverly done, and without the least offence," he wrote, "also that you have many very distinguished people in your gallery. But I would rather not." On the other hand, he could have had no serious objection to *The World*, as on two occasions he wrote to me proposing to supply a novel for its columns. I did not think it expedient to comply with his suggestion.

CHAPTER XIV.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

1872—1873.

It is from an "example" of a rule in the Eton Latin Grammar that we learn "rest much delights a weary person." I do not know that I was particularly weary when I finally retired from the Post Office service; but I thought that a little rest would do me good. I had been travelling constantly for two years, and working hard the while. It was advisable, I considered, that I should lie fallow for some short period before entering again upon any permanent employment.

Meanwhile I was not wholly idle. I was finishing a novel, *A Waiting Race*, and plotting another, *The Yellow Flag*. I went to Rotterdam for the *Daily News*, to describe the *fêtes* consequent on the tercentenary of the recapture of Brielle from the Spaniards, and I wrote a portion of the description of the thanksgiving ceremonies at St. Paul's, for the recovery of the Prince of Wales, for the same journal. I was contributing regularly to *All the Year Round* and the *Observer*, and, under a female pseudonym, was writing a weekly article called "Five o'Clock Tea" in the *Queen*, which was a source of vast amusement to me, evoking, as it did, a large number of letters from correspondents, all of whom imagined that the writer, "Mrs. Seaton," was a veritable personage. When it is learned that, in addition to these trifles, I was, in conjunction with Mr. A. W. Dubourg, engaged upon a three-act drama entitled *Without*

Love, which was afterwards produced at the Olympic, it will probably be believed that I had but little leisure.

From time to time, however—indeed, whenever I had a few spare moments to devote to reflection—I was desperately nervous about the future. The regular income—so regular, though not very large—had stopped for ever, and I was wholly dependent upon my own brains for provision for my family. I was in full work, it was true; but I was constantly asking myself how long that would last. I had been writing novels for nearly ten years, and though I had fortunately had no experience of "drawing a blank" on my brain coverts, I could not help feeling I had pretty nearly told all I had to tell, and that future attempts would be but a going over of the old ground. In ordinary press-work, too, I had as much to do as I wished; but I felt anything but inclined to regard as the mainstay of my fortunes what I had hitherto only looked upon as an adjunct to my income; and yet what other means were there by which money might be honestly made?

This question was answered in a very curious way. I have mentioned having at various times delivered lectures on literary subjects in London and large provincial towns, and my *clientèle* in this matter had so much increased that my engagements as lecturer were bringing me in nearly two hundred a year. In April, '72, I went to Punchestown races for the *Daily News*, and returning through Dublin the next day, I delivered, in pursuance of a previously-made promise, before the Royal College of Science in Stephen's Green, a lecture which I called "Good Authors at a Discount," and which was received with a vast amount of appreciation and applause. A week afterwards, I was describing this experience to a friend who was dining with me, adding that I must now try and extend my lecturing connection, when he suddenly startled me by saying, "Why not go to America?"

A strange man, this friend of mine, Henry Wikoff by name, a chevalier of some Spanish order of knighthood, but an American citizen, born in Philadelphia early in the century,

and living all his life ever since. As a very young man, well off, travelling in Europe for his pleasure; then half friend, half agent of Fanny Elssler, the *danseuse*, importing her to America; bosom friend of the original James Gordon Bennett, and writer in the *New York Herald;* back in Europe, visiting Lady Blessington, and mixing with the Gore House set, specially attracting and attracted by Louis Napoleon, an exile in London. Imprisoned in Italy for attempting to abduct an heiress; engaged as diplomatic agent, otherwise spy, by Lord Palmerston, possibly by Louis Napoleon—whom he visited as prisoner at Ham, as President of the French Republic at the Elysée, as Emperor at the Tuileries, as prisoner at Wilhelmshöhe, and by whose corpse he stood at the lying-in-state at Chislehurst—by General Dan Sickles, U.S. Minister at the Court of her most Catholic Majesty Isabella of Spain, from whom the Chevalier's cross was obtained. Oscillating between London, Paris, and New York, but residing chiefly in London, which he much preferred; trying to do a bit of finance, writing away at his memoirs—task destined never to be accomplished—dining, on regular days of the week, with certain friends always glad to see him for his good temper, his pleasant chat, his enormous interest in everything concerning those he liked; finally fading away in the spring of 1884, in a little lodging we took for him at Brighton, skilfully attended, sedulously nursed, making a painless end of a restless life.

Such the Chevalier Wikoff, his outward appearance corresponding with the oddity of his life and ways. A tall, gentlemanly-looking man, with a "swivel" eye, rough-hewn features, a carefully-arranged *toupet*-wig, a couple of inches of dyed whisker; frock-coated, high-cravated, and always well shod.

"Why not go to America? Lecturing is a regular profession there, and plenty of money to be made at it. Your voice is good, your manner brisk, light, and lively, just the very thing to suit that people! Get some good subjects, interesting, piquant, full of descriptive touches, and you'll do well. Your

name is well known through your novels; and they're an inquisitive nation—they'll want to see you!"

Thus the Chevalier, opening with one sentence an entirely new and enormous prospect for my consideration. Beyond having sold my advanced sheets to New York and Boston publishers, and having made the acquaintance of certain pleasant citizens, my relations with the United States had been absolutely *nil*, and the idea of going there had never entered my mind. But, in the state of doubt, uncertainty, and anxiety in which I was, the Chevalier's suggestion came upon me like a revelation, and I at once laid it before one or two friends, seeking their advice.

I was generally reassured. Sala's views, to which I attached much importance, as those of a man gifted with business common sense, as well as brains, who had spent some months in the country, as well as being much with travelled Americans—Sala's views, clearly stated in an excellent letter, were all in favour of my going. He thought that the "Personal Recollections of Dickens and Thackeray," which I had named, would be very attractive; he suggested other topics, and gave me some sound advice. Frank Scudamore, Parkinson, and other friends were equally hopeful; and so, after many long and sufficiently wretched talkings-over of the matter at home, where the thought of a prolonged separation had to be faced, questions of ways and means discussed, and provision for supplies during absence arranged, the old gentleman's suggestion was accepted, the die was cast, and my determination taken.

This was in May; the lecture season in America did not commence till October, and there was no use in my going out, I was informed, on account of the heat, the emptiness of the great cities, etc., until the end of August. But I had plenty to do in the interval. Under advice, I wrote to the New York Lecture Bureau, which, for a small percentage on their earnings, acts as an intermediary between lecturers and the various associations desiring to be lectured to; sending a synopsis and some general idea of the lectures I proposed to deliver, and

desiring to be ranked among their clients. A polite reply assured me of their best services; my name was well known, my subjects enticing, and I should doubtless do very well. They would expect to see me in September.

Encouraged by this, I went to work with a will. I reduced the Egyptian Hall entertainment to the "monopolylogue" form in which I had originally written it for myself, smartened it up with some fresh jokes, and resuscitated the excellent crayon heads by John Leech, Frith, and Marcus Stone, so happily illustrating the various characters, which had long been laid by. I wrote my "Personal Recollections of Dickens and Thackeray;" and for this Mr. John O'Connor painted me two fair-sized views in distemper on canvas, mounted on rollers for facile transit, one of Gadshill Place, the other of the house which Thackeray built for himself on Kensington Palace Green, where he died. Both houses lent themselves admirably to effect, and both pictures were very effective. They were highly appreciated by those who saw them; but they were lost or stolen within a couple of months of my arrival in America. In addition to these, Mr. Leslie Ward, then a very young man, but giving promise of all his present cleverness, made for me in crayons, and of large size, a sketch of Dickens, from a private photograph, representing him sipping a glass of wine as he leant against the portico at Gadshill, and a reproduction of Boehm's wonderful statuette of Thackeray. These created great interest everywhere, and I am fortunate enough to have preserved them. Then I furbished up and retouched my very first and original lecture, "Good Authors at a Discount," and made full notes for another on "The British Parliament," to be extended out there, if occasion should arise.

Working away all this time at *A Waiting Race* and *The Yellow Flag* simultaneously—the former nearly finished, to appear in three-volume shape; the latter to run as a serial through *All the Year Round*. A flying visit to France on literary business, forty-eight hours' travelling and twelve hours' rest; Fechter in the Calais-Paris train, *quantum mutatus!*

bloated, red-faced, short in temper and rough in manner, all his charming courtesy lost, but promising to do everything for me in America, where he was then domiciled. A flying visit to Ireland, to the bedside of one of my boys, stricken with typhoid fever at Portarlington. A series of leave-taking dinners: with the Bellews, where I met Mr. Morton Macmichael, proprietor of a leading Philadelphia journal, and a most delightful man; with Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Wills, at their charming place, Sherrards, near Welwyn, where we stopped from Saturday till Monday; with Mr. Julius Beer, proprietor of the *Observer*, Edward Dicey, and a party at Greenwich; with the Harold Powers; with R. W. Edis, at the Arts Club; with the Salas, then staying at the White Hart Hotel at Margate, where we had the best of dinners in the tiniest of rooms. More last words with all kinds of business people; more last words with Charles Dickens about the Christmas Number of *All the Year Round*, which I had arranged again to write for him, sending MS. from America; more last words of injunction from Wikoff; the sharp pangs of adieu; and then, accompanied by my faithful secretary Simpson, I left town for Liverpool on the 30th August, 1872, to sail for New York in the Cunard Company's ship *Cuba* the next day.

I shall not readily forget that evening at the North-Western Hotel. I had parted, for a long time at least, with all I loved in the world; I was going among strangers; I had relinquished the calling in which I had been engaged for a quarter of a century; and, looking at my position plainly, I could not fail to recognise the fact that, with a family to support and at forty-one years of age, I was virtually beginning life again, and going forth to seek my fortune. The animal spirits, objurgated so many years before by Sir Rowland Hill, prevented my taking an utterly desponding view of affairs, but I was in a sufficiently low frame of mind; and I well remember the delight with which I encountered an old Post Office friend, Christopher Sayers, who, being in the neighbourhood, had run over to have a chat, and the joy with which I discovered that the Bancrofts

were playing an engagement at the theatre. A dinner with Sayers, and a visit behind the scenes, passed the evening; and the next day Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, with whom I had long been on friendly terms, came out in the *Cuba's* tender to see the last of me. To them were confided the latest messages for those I had left at home; and when their kindly faces faded away, I felt the full gravity of the step I had taken, and began to be uncomfortably dubious as to its wisdom.

It was, however, too late to moralise, for the tender was rapidly disappearing, and we were fairly off. "Strange company we harboured" on board the s.s. *Cuba*, though as, after leaving Queenstown, we ran into a storm which continued for three days, I saw only those half-dozen of my fellow-passengers whose legs and stomachs were sufficiently strong and steady to permit their pacing the deck or sitting at the table. When the weather moderated, and at once became lovely, I found we had on board several musical celebrities, who were proceeding for a tour in America, under the auspices of Mr. Henry Jarrett, the well-known operatic agent. Among them were Madame Lucca, with her parents—strange little Viennese Jews, for all the world like the people who in my youthful days used to sit at the doors of the old houses in the Frankfort Juden-gasse; Anton Rubinstein, with his grim Calmuck face and massive brow; and Wieniawski, the celebrated Polish violinist.

The last-named shared, in the daytime, the cabin of the chief engineer, a dry Scotchman, himself an amateur of the violin, whose whole desire was to get his distinguished visitor to give him a "taste of his quality." Wieniawski, however, persistently, though courteously, declined; but one day, towards the end of the voyage, allowing himself to be persuaded, he took up the Scotchman's instrument, and for an hour wrung from it divine harmony. When it was over the engineer came into the doctor's cabin, where I was sitting, and, with a grin of triumph, said, "Eh, doctor, but I've got a scrape out of the beggar at last!"

Miss Clara Louise Kellogg, the American prima donna;

Mr. Mark Smith, an American actor who had been playing with much success in Mrs. John Wood's company at the St. James's, one of the most genial and delightful of men; and Miss Clara Doria, a member of the Parepa-Rosa *troupe*, were also on board, as were Colonel Steele of the Albany, and Mr. Edwards Pierrepont, afterwards U.S. Minister in London.

The voyage was pleasant enough, though wholly uneventful, and there was only one incident worth recording. I had noticed from time to time that a little spoffish American gentleman, who invariably wore a *pince-nez* glass, had regarded me with great curiosity, following me up and down the deck, and taking up coigns of vantage for observation purposes. About the fifth day out this gentleman met me face to face. We both stopped.

"Mr. Edmund Yates?" said he interrogatively.

I "owned up."

"Mr. Yates, sir," said he, "I should like to have the pleasure of shaking hands with you, sir. I am proud to make the acquaintance of such a distinguished," etc.

Of course I was covered with blushes as I shook hands with the gentleman, but I could not help asking him why, since he wished to make my acquaintance, he had not done so previously: he was probably aware who I was.

"Wal, sir," he said, "that is so! They had told me at the Cunard office that the author of *The Yellow Flag* would be on board, and I've been looking out for him ever since we sailed. But I never thought it was you, sir! You're not my notion of the build of an author, sir! *I thought you was a British athlete going out to wrestle!*"

On the morning of Wednesday, the 11th September, we steamed up the beautiful bay of New York, and landed in Jersey City. We were boarded by the usual band of interviewing reporters, but they made at once for the musical celebrities; and to the very few who condescended to such small game as myself I promised all facilities at the hotel, the Brevoort House, to which I had been warmly recommended

by George Sala, who pronounced it, what I could certainly indorse, the best hotel in the world. There were crowds on the wharf, personal friends and relatives of most of the passengers, but of course there was no one to greet me. At last a young gentleman, in a very shabby straw hat and sand-shoes, came up to me, and introduced himself as a young Englishman with whom I had recently had some correspondence on journalistic matters. We walked up and down the wharf while the baggage was being got ready for Customs examination, and he told me that, having heard I was coming out to lecture, he had made it his business to call at the Lecture Bureau, and see what engagements they had procured for me. He found there was not a single one, and he volunteered his opinion that I had made a great mistake in coming to America! This, with the sight of a funeral car, which was the first object that met my gaze as I drove from the wharf to the city, was my welcome to my new sphere of labour.

But my hearty reception by Mr. Waite, the host of the Brevoort House, and the delightful bed and bath room which he appropriated to me, and an excellent dinner at Delmonico's, where I entertained the *Cuba's* doctor and my dolorous friend of the shabby straw hat, soon restored me to my usual spirits. I was duly interviewed the next day, and was found by one gentleman to be "hearty in bearing, wide-awake and genial, a man who has watched the world with a keen and observant eye." Another described me as "of prepossessing appearance, easy, graceful, and well-spoken." A third was more photographic. "He is not less than six feet in height, strongly built, broad-chested, large square head, great protruding black eyes, heavy under-jaw, and a mouth expressive at once of firmness, taste, and good temper. He is something over forty years of age, *but apart from a visible tendency to baldness on the crown of the head*, there is nothing to show that 'the enemy' has yet obtained any decided hold upon him."

Then came a deputation from the Lotus Club, kindly proposing a "reception" in my honour on an evening to be

settled; and then I went to the Lecture Bureau, where I found matters by no means so dismal as had been represented. True, there were no engagements entered for me; but, as Mr. Brelsford, the manager, pointed out, there was nothing wonderful in that, considering that my programmes had only just been distributed, and amongst the far-off institutes and associations I was probably wholly unknown. After a long business talk Mr. Brelsford professed to be satisfied with my chances. Let me satisfy the New York people, and above all the New York press, and my provincial success would follow as a matter of course. At least a month must elapse before the lecture-going classes would be back from the country and the watering-places; and Mr. Brelsford's advice was, that during that time I should see and be seen as much as possible.

The upshot was, that after being photographed at Gurney's—a *sine quâ non* for all lecturers—I started off with some *Cuba* acquaintances for Saratoga and Lake George. Returning, I went to the "reception" at the Lotus Club in my honour, and was warmly welcomed by the president, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, then and now editor of the *New York Tribune*, in a graceful and racy speech. Invitations to all kinds of festivals poured in amain. The most charming of cultivated citizens of the world, "Uncle" Sam Ward, who died at Pegli this spring, was my fellow-lodger at the Brevoort, and with his bosom-friend W. H. Hurlbert, then the accomplished editor of the *New York World*, was never tired of entertaining me. Under their auspices I visited Jerome Park races, and was made an honorary member of the Manhattan Club. I was also on the honorary list of the Union, the Union League, the Century, and five other clubs, besides being made a life-member of the Lotus. A grand *déjeûner* given me at Delmonico's by the well-known publishing firm of Harper Brothers, and much other social enjoyment, I owed to the kindness of Mr. W. A. Seaver, who became one of my most intimate friends.

In the daytime I was working hard with my secretary Simpson, dictating to him chapters of *The Yellow Flag*, which

were sent over to *All the Year Round* as they were finished. I had hopes of completing the story before commencing my lecture-work; but one day Mr. Brelsford made his appearance with the news that I was wanted to open the new Star Course of Lectures at Chicago on the 30th inst. This I at once refused. I told Mr. Brelsford that, little as I knew about it, I felt it would be madness for me to make my *début* anywhere but in New York, or to attempt to win provincial audiences without the *cachet* of the New York press. Mr. Brelsford, admitting some cogency in my argument, declared that Chicago afforded me a good opening; and after some discussion it was finally arranged that the Chicago engagement should be accepted, and that efforts should be made to secure a large hall, that I might make a previous appearance in New York.

Accordingly, on the evening of Friday—always my lucky day—the 27th September, 1872, I made my first appearance before an American audience at the Association Hall, corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street, New York, with my lecture, "Modern Society." The hall was crammed, some two thousand five hundred people being present. In England I had always been a little nervous immediately before appearing on the platform, but on this occasion, as on every other in America, I was perfectly comfortable, and chatted with Simpson until I stepped forth. I had a very hearty reception; laughter and applause began at once and continued throughout; and so little embarrassed was I that when I was placing upon the easel Mr. Marcus Stone's admirable pictorial illustration of one of my characters, which by chance strongly resembled Horace Greeley, of the *Tribune*, then standing for the Presidentship, and I said, "I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, this was not intended as the likeness of any prominent American citizen," the hit made was immense.

When the lecture concluded, amid loud cheering and hearty shouts of approval, I was surrounded by the officers of the Bureau, and friends, who all assured me that I had achieved a great success. A similar opinion was given by Mr. Seaver,

who, with Paul Lindau, brother of Rudolf Lindau, the German author, bore me off to supper at Delmonico's. When I arrived home at the Brevoort, Mr. Waite, the landlord, of whose portly form I had caught a glimpse in the lecture-hall, was sitting up to welcome me. "Couldn't resist waiting to see you, Mr. Yates!" he said, grasping my hand. "You'll do well here, sir! your style and manner just suit our people!"

It was almost the echo of Wikoff's prophecy, and I went to bed with a light heart, hopeful for the future.

Be sure that I had all the daily papers on my bed the next morning as soon as I roused. The favourable verdict was echoed by all, the longest notice being given by the *Herald*, whose criticism on this (to me) most important occasion I now reproduce:

NEW YORK HERALD, Saturday, Sept. 28, 1872.

"MODERN SOCIETY."

EDMUND YATES MAKES HIS BOW.

THE FASHIONABLE WORLD ATTEND THE FIRST LECTURE OF THE ENGLISH NOVELIST IN LARGE NUMBERS—HIGH AND LOW LIFE, BALLS, DINNERS, THE PARK, THE OPERA, AND THE SEASIDE, THE COUNTING-HOUSE AND THE MUSICAL PARTIES—THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION AMUSED, EDIFIED, AND ENTERTAINED.

Last evening, in the presence of a fashionable and intellectual audience of 2,500 persons of both sexes, Mr. Edmund Hodgson Yates, the well-known English novelist and lecturer, made his *début* at the Hall of the Young Men's Christian Association, and the verdict pronounced by those 2,500 well-bred and well-informed people will, no doubt, be accepted as final by the American public—a public which, though very hospitable, is also very hard to please. In the United States, of living English novelists Charles Reade is read more than any other, and Edmund Yates comes next in rank. Born in 1831, and known as the dramatic critic of the London *Daily News*, and as editor of the *Temple Bar Magazine*, and having now considerable fame as a constant contributor to *All the Year Round*, he met with an intelligent, as well as appreciative, audience last evening, who knew him through the

columns of those periodicals and magazines, in addition to the fact that they also bore in their minds a vivid remembrance of his literary individuality in the series of novels that have appeared from time to time over his name, the best known of which are *Running the Gauntlet*, *Black Sheep*, *Kissing the Rod*, *Broken to Harness*, *Land at Last*, and the serial now running the magazines with the title of *The Yellow Flag*. The best newspaper-work of Mr. Yates, perhaps, was that done by him for a couple of years in the London *Morning Star*, in the column headed the "Flâneur."

To many of the people who saw the novelist last evening for the first time, Mr. Yates more than filled the ideal formed of him. It is a common and popular superstition that every man who writes half a dozen successful books must have a pale and consumptive appearance; that he must be weak at the knees; that he will be afflicted with bad hearing, and a difficulty in his eyesight. Therefore, all were more than agreeably disappointed when a tall six-foot gentleman, in unexceptionable evening dress, with the orthodox white tie, the brawn and muscle of a Life Guardsman, stepped upon the platform to receive one of the heartiest welcomes ever given by a New York audience to a stranger. Mr. Yates has large massive features, parts his dark hair in the middle, and he got to work last evening with the ease and force of an accomplished cricketer. To be brief, he bowled his way into the hearts of his audience, and made them feel as easy as he felt himself, which, without any disrespect to Mr. Yates, is no slight accomplishment. There were no dramatic effects or accessories, there being simply a mahogany reading-desk, a big pitcher of ice-water, a large tumbler to drink it from, and a dozen or so of cartoons and crayons made by Frith, John Leech, and Marcus Stone, which were amply illustrative of the characters introduced by Mr. Yates in his lecture.

The lecture was entitled "Modern Society," and has been delivered by its author for a hundred nights in London. Mr. Yates dealt gently with his subjects, and now and then little bits of his books and magazine articles appeared; but their appearance was not obtrusive, and hearty laughter and applause were yielded to the energy of his description and the excellent drollery of his mimicry. There is a placidity and ease about English humour that strongly contrasts with the grotesqueness and wild *abandon* of American humour; but the most earnest admirers of Artemus

Ward or Mark Twain cannot but indorse the clear-sighted and pungent terseness of the hits made by Edmund Yates at the fashionable follies of the day. He is a close observer of whatever is ridiculous and overstrained in the social anachronisms of the world in which he moved, and his sketches of the physician who, after the manner of Abernethy, but lacking his ability, first pockets the patient's guinea and then insults him; of the "lady's doctor," who is shod with velvet, and whose tongue is disgustingly oleaginous; of the "old-young lady," who has seen too many watering-places; of the "dawdling swell," who carries off the belle of the evening from the "bashful young man" with a yawn and a sneer; and of the too indulgent "papa" at the seaside, who is a bear in his counting-house in the City—were all well done, and elicited the heartiest tributes from an audience who were more than eager to anticipate every joke and stroke of humour made manifest during the evening. There is nothing bitter, or coarse, or painful in the style of Mr. Yates, and the ladies particularly seemed to enjoy the entertainment; and where the ladies are secured it is unnecessary to say that more than half of the battle has been fought and won. In fine, Edmund Yates, on his first evening in America, has succeeded; and now he needs but to do one thing, and that is, to give his audience a variety, and his triumph is made certain.*

These notices—and all were equally good—had immediate effect. Before I went down to breakfast I had a visit from the manager of *The Fireside Companion*, a cheap publication with a large circulation, with whom I agreed, for a sum of 500*l.*, to write a short serial sensational story in ten chapters, to commence within a month—this with *The Yellow Flag* unfinished, and the promised *All the Year Round* Christmas Number unthought of! † The temptation, however, was too great, and,

* I have a strong idea, though no positive proof, that this critique was written by Mr. O'Kelly, now M.P. for Roscommon, who was at that time engaged on the *Herald*.

† The story was called *A Bad Lot*, and served its purpose; was indeed so successful that I wrote another for the same firm. It was advertised most extensively and most oddly by means of a huge woodcut about six feet long and three feet broad—a rough reproduction of a photograph of myself. At the top of this was my name, at the bottom "A Bad Lot." These Brobdingnagian portraits were most lavishly disseminated; not only

under the reaction of joy caused by the sudden improvement in my prospects, I did not care what amount of work I undertook.

On the evening of that same day (Saturday, 28th September) I started for Chicago, arriving there, after a thirty-six hours' journey, on Monday morning. The whole of that day was spent in wandering over the city, fruitlessly searching for my box of cartoon portraits, which had got astray in the train, and without which I had to lecture at night. This search, however, afforded me excellent opportunity for studying the place, which was in a most interesting state, exactly a year having elapsed since its devastation by the great fire, and new quarters, streets, and houses already springing up with inconceivable rapidity. In this peregrination round the blackened walls and *débris* of the still standing portion of the burnt city I found the idea for the framework of the Christmas Number for *All the Year Round*, for which I had been long seeking, and set to work to write it under the title of "Doomsday Camp."

On my return from Chicago, where I lectured twice, I found my friends of the Bureau in high spirits at my success, and full of prophecy of future engagements. The whole of the daytime I was compelled to devote to my literary work, and the genial hospitality pressed upon me was so vast that my evenings were always most agreeably occupied. Immediately after my return, I dined with the Liberal Club of New York, sitting on the right hand of the chairman, Horace Greeley, who was at that time opposing General Grant as candidate for the Presidentship, and who questioned me much about Rowland Hill and English postal matters, and about Dickens, for whom he professed the highest admiration.

A few nights afterwards I was present at a thoroughly American demonstration, a mass-meeting of women, held at the Cooper Institute, in support of the candidature of General

in New York, but in all large cities, wherever I travelled, I found them; and, as they were posted on the walls, not in single files, but in battalions, they were painfully conspicuous.

Grant. The hall was packed to suffocation. Looking down from the platform, the scene was like a cornfield of faces thickly packed together. Here and there a negro's face appeared, and at irregular intervals a black woman's form. The platform was crowded with the friends and families of the fair speakers, who, as a matter of course, applauded loudly and always at the wrong time, if the manifestations of the audience could be taken as a criterion. A number of policemen were present, sitting about or lounging against the pillars of the hall.

The great gun of the meeting, as announced formally, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was not present, but she sent a letter, which was read by the chairman, Mr. Luther R. Marsh, a well-known lawyer, who appeared in evening dress and wore a blazing red necktie. Whenever the courage of the female speakers faltered under the storm of hisses when they mentioned Grant's name, or when a wild uproarious cheer was raised for Greeley, Mr. Marsh stepped into the breach with his eyeglass and his red necktie and his evening dress-coat, and talked of the rebels. He said nothing new, but he said a great many bitter things which provoked hisses and disapproval.

The prettiest of the lady speakers was Mrs. or Miss Lilly Devereaux Blake (it will be observed that all the speakers have three names), and she was much applauded because she spoke but for twenty minutes. Miss or Mrs. Blake was dressed in a purple barred silk, and she wore an immense brass ornament in her back hair, which was much admired. The "old and gallant veteran of a hundred fights," as she was described in the newspapers, Susan B. Anthony, sat near Mrs. or Miss Blake, with her hair done in plain flat plaits, and she was attired simply in a snuff-coloured silk dress. Miss Anthony was the best speaker, and during the evening's entertainment she was boiling over with memoranda and other paragraphs. The Rev. (?) Olympia Brown was quite a boon to the audience. The Rev. Olympia, who received holy orders from some township in Connecticut, was dressed in a green check silk, and had

her hair done up in a very symmetrical knot and tied at the back of her well-shaped head. Miss Matilda Joslyn Gase was dressed in a black silk, and considerable excitement was manifested by the audience while she spoke.

The opening speech of Mr. Luther R. Marsh was a gem. If I had ever doubted the truth of the portrait of the Hon. Elijah Pogram, I was now convinced of its unexaggerated fidelity. In the most solemn voice, and in short broken sentences, with a distinct pause between each, Mr. Marsh commenced: "A new period has come. The ancient clock of Time, from its belfry in the sky, strikes another hour! *The* world has moved on its orbit through another degree!" And his peroration, spoken with breathless rapidity, was equally amusing: "Well may the women of America come forward to the rescue at this vital crisis in our career, and do what they can to aid the re-election of General Grant; for to his valour, his patience, his magnificent generalship, than which none brighter shines in the annals of war; to him, the most aggressive of warriors, the most clement of victors, whose combativeness gives place to magnanimity ere the sulphurous clouds of battle clear away; to him who, after the surrender under the apple-tree, seemed to be the only man on whom the people could agree to direct the reconstructive and recuperative energies of the nation; to him more than to any other man do they owe the continuance of their government, the return of their husbands and sons, the reign of order, peace, and prosperity, and the unmolested occupancy of their own homes."

Mrs. L. D. Blake, who was quite a pretty little woman, raised a storm of applause by declaring that "To-morrow the waves of success would rise still higher from Pennsylvania and Ohio, until in November next around the shores of this Republic would swell the high tide of victory;" and Mrs. Susan B. Anthony, a veteran resembling Phiz's portrait of Sally Brass, caused immense amusement by her description of an interview with Mr. Greeley, in the course of which she went down on her knees to him, without producing any effect. Finally, we all

sang the "Star-spangled Banner," and I went home, after a most amusing evening.

My diary at this time shows a round of delightful entertainments. I dined with, amongst others, Launt Thompson, the sculptor, at the Century Club; Chief Justice Daly, President of the Geographical Society; Judge Brady, a distinguished wit and *raconteur;* L. J. Jennings, at the Travellers' Club; W. H. Marston, at the Union Club; Whitelaw Reid, at the Union League Club; J. S. Morgan, at the Knickerbocker; Lester Wallack; Sothern and Boucicault, then both starring in New York; and Fechter, whom I found much changed for the worse in appearance, health, and manner. I visited Mr. James Gordon Bennett—the present possessor of the name, the father had died in the summer—on board his yacht, and saw something of American country life at the charming residence of Mr. W. Butler Duncan, on Staten Island. The most splendid entertainment, taken all round, at which I have ever been present was given at Delmonico's, in my honour, by Judge-Surrogate Hutchings, where I made what was to prove the most valuable friendship of Mr. Fithian; while my especial friends Seaver, Hurlbert, and Uncle Sam took care that I should never have a dull evening.

All this time I was working away at *The Yellow Flag*, which I finished on the 24th October, at the Christmas Number of *All the Year Round*, and at *A Bad Lot*, while engagements for lecturing were daily coming into the Bureau. I lectured on my reminiscences of Dickens and Thackeray ("Princes of the Pen") in the Steinway Hall, and on "The British Parliament" before the Mercantile Literary Association. These lectures, with "Modern Society" and "Good Authors at a Discount," I repeated some half-dozen times in New York. "Princes of the Pen" I also gave at Brooklyn, in the Rev. De Witt Talmage's "Tabernacle" there, being afterwards most hospitably entertained at supper by the Faust Club, where I was welcomed, in a most kindly speech, by the well-known Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

My first "provincial" lecture, as I may call it, was delivered at Newhaven, where among the audience was Donald G. Mitchell—"Ik. Marvell"—whose delightful book, *Reveries of a Bachelor*, had been known to me for years, and with whom I had a pleasant chat.

My first visit to Boston was a flying one, on the 17th October, where I lectured in the Music Hall, supped with Mr. Nathan Appleton at the Somerset Club, and, after lunching the next day with Mr. Osgood and Mr. Ticknor, the publishers, at the Union Club, returned to fulfil engagements at New York. I made the Parker House at Boston my head-quarters on the 5th of the next month, when I lectured at Cambridgeport, a few miles off, after spending a most delightful day with Professor Longfellow.

Cretâ notandæ were those half-dozen hours. Longfellow was ailing and weak, but he roused up in conversation: talked of his visit to Gadshill, when Dickens drove him through the Kentish country in an open carriage-and-four, with postboys in scarlet jackets; of Westminster Abbey; of Niagara; and of modern English poets, expressing warm admiration for the lyrics of Mortimer Collins, a copy of which I afterwards sent him.

I was engaged to lecture again in Boston on the 12th November, but on the 10th broke out the fire by which a large portion of the city was destroyed; and when I arrived, in pursuance of my engagement, all business was at a standstill, the streets were in gloom, there being no gas, and everything was most wretched. Of course the lecture was postponed, so I passed my evening in a big room at the Revere House, trying to read by candlelight, until a street-organ outside, playing—of all tunes, at such a time, and under such circumstances—"Home, Sweet Home," sent me to bed in despair.

On subsequent visits to Boston I was entertained by Mr. James T. Fields, the well-known publisher, at the Saturday Club, and had a delightful morning with Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. On the last occasion of my lecturing there I dined with Dr.

Townshend, with whom I had crossed in the *Cuba*. He accompanied me to the Hall, and, on our entering the anteroom, we found my faithful Simpson, whom he recognised.

"Well, Mr. Simpson," said the Doctor, "here's Mr. Yates going to give us his reminiscences of Dickens and Thackeray! In a few years we shall have you coming round, giving us your reminiscences of Yates!"

In Philadelphia I lectured twice, in the Academy of Music, to a very large audience on each occasion. It was the first time I had stood on an enormous stage, of which I was the sole occupant, facing an immense body of spectators; but they were exceptionally kind, and all went excellently. The "boss of my show" was a certain Mr. Pugh, the originator of the Star Course of Lectures. On his handing my cheque to Simpson, the latter took occasion to remark that Mr. Yates had had fine audiences.

"Splendid audiences, sir!" said Mr. Pugh.

"And you are quite satisfied, Mr. Pugh?"

"Quite: shall be glad to see Mr. Yates again."

This ought to have been sufficient, but the faithful one tried him once more.

"And you liked what you heard of the lecture, Mr. Pugh?"

"What I heard of it, sir! Why, look here, young man, I've been running the Star Course of Lectures for ten years, and I've never heard a single word of any of them!"

While at Philadelphia I was the house-guest of Mr. Clayton Macmichael, son of Mr. Morton Macmichael, whose acquaintance I had made in London, the President of the Committee of Fairmount Park, a lovely demesne, over which he drove me. It is impossible for me to overrate the kindness of this hospitable family. I was also most pleasantly entertained by Mr. Daniel Dougherty, a member of the Bar, known as the "silver-tongued orator," and by a number of gentlemen at the Union League Club.

This club, numbering at the time of my visit nineteen hundred members, has a curious history. In Anthony Trollope's

North America there was a statement to the effect that, while public political sentiment in New York was divided, in Philadelphia it was decidedly Southern. This statement caused great offence, and the Union League Club was instituted as a proof of its incorrectness. While I was in Philadelphia General Meade, the hero of Gettysburg, died amidst universal grief. He was buried at Laurel Hill Cemetery, and the funeral was singularly effective, as, in consequence of the prevalence of the horse-disease, the body was conveyed to the cemetery by water, the funeral procession taking place on the river Schuylkill. At the entrance of the grounds the coffin passed under an arch, formed by the raised crossed swords of the cavalry.

I lectured once in Washington, in Lincoln Hall, before our Minister, Sir Edward Thornton, and some members of the Legation; I was also introduced to Mr. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. Robeson, Secretary of the Admiralty; and Mr. Belknap, Secretary at War, who were present. The last-mentioned, in shaking hands, laughingly said I was "the whitest Englishman" he had ever seen. I was told this was a compliment, implying "the least affected," but I am still doubtful on the point. Sir E. Thornton did me the honour of asking me to dinner the next day, but I was compelled to proceed on my travels.

The one complaint which I had against the managers of the Bureau, who treated me throughout in the most courteous and most honourable manner, was that they had not arranged my lectures with any reference to the geographical position of the towns to be lectured in, and without any attempt, consequently, to save me fatigue in travelling. This was, perhaps, rendered impossible by the fact that, as my engagements had been made wholly on the strength of the New York success, it was necessary to accept every offer as it came; but the result was that I was always "in the cars."

It would be different, I was assured, when I started on my grand tour, which was to commence on the 12th December, and continue "right away" for six weeks, without any return

to New York; but meantime, what with constant travel, and constant work while travelling—I used to engage a "state-room," *i.e.*, a private compartment, on the train, and would be dictating my novel to Simpson all the way—it was certainly not idleness.

I cannot give a better idea of the manner in which my time was passed than by quoting from a letter which I wrote home from Syracuse, N.Y., dated December 8th, '72:

"Take a specimen of my life. I arrived at the Brevoort at mid-day Thursday, after lecturing in the country; wrote letters, wound up affairs, dined and lectured some eight miles off. Home; packing up till one. Up again at six and off at eight. Travelled three hundred miles, arriving here at 6.30. Lectured at eight, to bed at ten. Next morning worked at story from nine till one: dined, started at 2.30, travelled one hundred and twenty miles, arriving at 7.45; lectured at eight; started again at midnight, arriving here at four this morning; up at ten, worked till one, and have since been driving with one A. W., great friend of Dr. H.'s, with whom I dine at six. No more 'unexceptionable evening dress,' etc. I lecture now in a frock-coat and striped trousers; and as I cannot have much washing done on my travels, have come to flannel shirts, and false collars and wristbands."

But I was in capital spirits and excellent health. Indeed, with the exception of one bilious attack, which did not last half a day, I did not have an hour's illness during the six months I was in America. I suppose the ill-effects of the high living in New York, the *plats* of the Brevoort House, and the Verzenay and Heidsieck of Delmonico's, were counteracted by the frugal meals which alone were obtainable on my travels, for, in another letter, I wrote:

"O ——, enjoy your late dinner, your claret, and your comforts with extra relish, thinking of poor me! A scrambled dinner at one o'clock, with water; 'supper' (God help us!) at six, with a glass of milk; and breakfast—there is my daily fare. A glass of cold brandy-and-water and a cigar in the bedroom, before turning in, are my only creature-comforts."

And again:

"Capital houses and great success everywhere, but the life is sufficiently rough. Chicago will be comparative comfort, but just now it is not all sugar. The people, meaning it all most kindly, *will* interview and invite me, and it is with the greatest trouble I get off. . . . . Since writing the above, I have been fetched to go over the State Penitentiary (*went*). Shall be expected again in five minutes to go over Deaf and Dumb Asylum (*must go*). And all this time I'm travelling, and lecturing, and writing my 500*l.* story, with which I'm getting on well. (*Have been to Deaf and Dumb.*)"

Besides the places already mentioned, and before commencing my "grand tour," I lectured at Springfield, Yonkers, Bergen Point, Flushing, Danville (Pa.), Jersey City, Rondout, Syracuse, Batavia, Oswego, and Albany. On the 12th December I started off, my first halting-place being Pittsburgh. By this time what they call "the cold snap" had arrived, snow had fallen everywhere, and it was bitter weather.* Then to Zanesville, Columbus, and Detroit, to the Lake Michigan country; to Ann Arbour, where I lectured at the University to a splendid and most appreciative audience of students; to Kalamazoo, a quaint place quaintly named; and Grand Rapids. The weather had become frightful, constant snowstorms, roaring whirlwinds, and intense cold. The audience at Grand Rapids was a very small one. Only the strongest ventured to brave the storm. The next evening, the 21st December, I was due at Michigan City. My adventures in attempting to reach my destination will be learned from the following letter:

"St. Joseph, Lake Michigan,
Monday, Dec. 23, '72.

Our experiences may be said to have begun in earnest! On Saturday morning at twelve we started from Grand Rapids to make

* *Extract from letter:* "You would faint if you were to see my feet in the streets, enveloped in a pair of over-boots, half cloth, half indiarubber; but they are really necessary, the snow is so deep and penetrating. I have also my ulster, plaid, and a splendid pair of fur gauntlets."

for Michigan City, where I was to lecture that night. There had been very heavy snow, and we progressed but slowly, even with two engines. At six in the evening we ran into a snow-drift, stuck fast, and there we had to remain all night, and until ten o'clock yesterday morning, when we were fetched away in sledges and brought on here. Oh, that night! Forty persons: some young girls travelling alone, as American girls do, the engineers, brakesmen, firemen, etc., and a lot of roughs; plenty of wood fortunately, but nothing to eat nor to drink. Except three apples, I had nothing from eight Saturday morning till one yesterday afternoon. But the people were very good-tempered; and though there was more blasphemy than I ever heard, there was nothing else that was wrong. The sledge ride of six miles was the worst part of it. It was so intensely cold that my cheek just under the eye became frost-bitten. Fortunately, a man noticed it, and they stopped and rubbed my face with snow. My fur gauntlets secured my hands, but my feet were quite numb.

This is a mere village; but there is, fortunately, good, though rough, accommodation at the hotel, for there is every chance of our being detained here for two or three days more. The thermometer is *twelve degrees below zero* in the day, and worse at night, and it has never ceased blowing and snowing since we arrived. The bedroom which Simpson and I occupy (double-bedded) looks on to the Lake, and *is so cold that the ink froze in my valise!* I am very well, however, thank God! and should not mind it much but for the money loss. Have missed two engagements equal to sixty pounds, and don't know how many more I shall have to give up. Shan't get the chance of drinking your health on Christmas Day, I fear; for the brandy I brought with me from N.Y. is used up (one bottle burst with the cold), and here one can't say with Mrs. Prig, 'The drinks is all good.' However, it might be much worse. No chance of any letters (your last was dated Dec. 2) till I get to Chicago; and Simpson, who has just come up from the stove round which all sit to gossip, says they have given up talking of getting away. So I'll put this down for the present, and go on with my 500*l.* story."*

* There is always a newspaper reporter everywhere in America, and there was one, it seems, in this train. He sent a most humorous account of our adventure, which appeared in the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*. It is too

The conclusion of the adventure is told in a hurried postscript to the letter:

"Gardner House, Chicago,
Christmas Day, 4 P.M.

P.S.—Arrived here an hour ago. Yesterday I found I could stand it no longer; and so, as the railroad is still blocked, I started off on a sleigh for a twenty-five miles' drive across country. *Thermometer eighteen degrees below zero.* Such a make-up! Ulster, snow-boots, fur gauntlets, shooting-gaiters, immense comforter round nose and mouth, and over all—head and face with only one peep-hole—my Scotch plaid, like the veil of the Mokanna. Bore it very well; and when I dared to peep forth the country looked lovely. Dashed through drifts over the horses' shoulders, bells going all the time: thought perpetually of Irving."

The comforts of Gardner House were doubly enjoyable after my privations, and I remained there two or three days. Among my fellow-guests I found an old acquaintance, Miss Charlotte Cushman, whom I had not seen since, eighteen years before, she sang—or rather solemnly and weirdly chanted—Kingsley's ballad, "Mary, call the cattle home," in Mrs. Smedley's Jermyn Street drawing-room. We had much pleasant talk, and I went to McVicker's theatre to see her wonderful impersonation of Meg Merrilies. Another guest was Foster, the spiritualist medium, who tried all his "hanky-panky" on me, without the smallest success. He said he had never felt so nervous before, and ascribed his failure to "my well-known incredulity," and the reputation I had "of guying and bur-

long to quote; but one bit about myself is so funny that I must reproduce it:

"EDMUND YATES.

"About this time, if anyone had passed through the coach, he might have seen a tremendous pair of feet, and had his eyes been awake enough to follow up three feet to the fountain-head, he could have seen a frame which was fitted out exactly for the above-mentioned feet. 'He weighs well on to four hundred pounds, and has got on nine overcoats,' said a traveller. A closer inspection showed this to be Edmund Yates, the English novelist and lecturer."

lesquing" such matters. The last night of '72 was passed by me at a small place called Muskegon.

There is no need to describe in detail my wanderings and lecturings for the next two months, visits to strange places with strange names—East Saginaw, Fredonia, Titusville, Aurora, Watertown, etc. Providence (Rhode Island) and Portland (Maine) are more familiar to English ears. Suffice it to say that I spent two days, Saturday, 8th, and Sunday, 9th February, at Niagara, looking, with her crystallized surroundings, most lovely in her ice-robes; and that my last lectures "on the other side" were delivered on the 14th and 15th of the same month, at Montreal, where I had splendid audiences, a vote of thanks to me being proposed by Mr. Huntington, the Premier, and a splendid supper given me by the Snow-Shoe Club.

Then and there ended my Transatlantic lecture-tour, having lasted, off and on, for more than five months. Between leaving London at the end of August, 1872, and returning there in March, 1873, I travelled 26,000 miles, and delivered one hundred and six lectures, finished *The Yellow Flag*, wrote the framework of the *All the Year Round* Christmas Number and the whole of *A Bad Lot*, besides sending two or three occasional articles to the *Daily News*.

As a lecturer, I was treated by my audiences, my managers (the Bureau), and the press with invariable courtesy and respect; by the press, indeed, with special appreciation, leniency, and *esprit de corps*. As a visitor, I was received everywhere with the most pressing hospitality, made free of clubs, invited on my tour to stay at private houses, all kinds of stringent rules relaxed in my favour, nothing reckoned as a trouble which would do me service. That in every town I was popular among those whose acquaintance I made, I have every reason to hope. That I was successful amongst my audiences is certain. On the 20th January, Mr. Brelsford, the manager of the Bureau, called on me at the Brevoort House "to talk about the future." He expressed a strong desire that I should come out to America, under their auspices, the next season; he was pre-

pared, he said, to make me a distinct offer, and for my services, from the 31st October, '73, till the 30th January, '74, he would guarantee to pay me a sum of 12,000 dollars, or 2,400*l.*

This offer was generous, plucky, and tempting. But I did not accept it at once; I requested time for consideration; I had another affair on hand.

The truth was that, ungrateful though it may seem, I had always hated what Dickens called "the garish lights" of the platform; and though use had made them perfectly familiar to me, and though they had served my purpose far more effectually than I had ever expected, I was anxious to get back to my old calling, and to earn my living quietly, and without the necessity for public appearances.

With this idea always in my mind, I had proposed to Mr. James Gordon Bennett, soon after my arrival in America, that on my return home he should appoint me as the London correspondent of the *New York Herald*, with an adequate salary. I gave him my ideas of what I would do in the position, which seemed to please him, but he would make me no final answer, as he was about sailing for Europe. Since then I had written to him frequently, but without obtaining any conclusive or satisfactory reply; for Mr. Bennett, though one of the most charming of men, possesses beyond any other mortal the power, when it suits him, of keeping people waiting. He had himself supplemented my original idea by suggesting that I should not merely be his London correspondent, but his principal representative in Europe, travelling here and there, as occasion demanded; and to this I consented. Just then, when I was on the point of agreeing to Mr. Brelsford's suggestion that he should accept some proposals from Salt Lake City, San Francisco, etc., for the month of March, I received a cable message from Mr. Bennett, engaging me at a salary of 1,200*l.* a year, and bidding me return at once, as he wished me to represent him at the Vienna Exhibition, which opened on the 1st of May, but which would require attention long before that.

Here, then, I thought, was the full measure of my luck, for

had I not gained what I had striven for so hard? I returned to New York straight from Montreal, intending to go home in the first convenient steamer. But, on my arrival at Brevoort House, I found a letter awaiting me from Mr. Connery, the editor of the *Herald*, begging me to call there at once. Was Mr. Bennett going to throw me over? I fairly trembled as the thought crossed my mind, for I had cabled the good news home as soon as I heard it.

My fears were, however, speedily allayed. Mr. Bennett had merely telegraphed his wishes that I should attend the ceremonial at Washington consequent upon General Grant's inauguration as President for a second term, that I should describe it fully in the *Herald*, and then come to Europe as quickly as possible. I could now settle the exact date of my departure, and, the inauguration taking place on the 4th of March, I secured a cabin in the Cunarder *Calabria*, which sailed on the 12th.

I was a little nervous about the work I was called on to do at Washington, partly because it was to be performed on what were then to me entirely new conditions—that is to say, it was to be despatched at once over the wire to New York, to appear in the next morning's *Herald;* but more especially as I had an idea that Mr. Bennett might have cleverly proposed it as a kind of test of my fitness for the position which I was to hold under him.

But it had to be done, and it was done. I went to Washington, and remained there four days. I was presented to the President, and had long chats with General Sherman and General "Phil" Sheridan, both of whom were most courteous and kind. I was the house-guest of Franklin Philp, and I dined each night at "Welcker's" with Uncle Sam. I worked in the day like a horse, going everywhere, noting everything; and on the night before the ceremony, and on the evening of Inauguration Day, I dictated to Simpson what proved to be equivalent to four small-printed columns of the *Herald*, descriptive of what I had seen, and comment on the ceremony.

I think that the manner in which I executed this test-task

did me good. My friends were enthusiastic about it; it was generally copied and commented on, and chaffed, throughout the press, but always in a friendly strain; and, best of all, the astute editor of the *Herald*, not a man given to violent emotion or warmth of expression, "thought it would please Mr. Bennett." So I could enter on my new duties with a light heart.

There was much yet to be done. Before leaving Washington, I climbed to the top of a very high house, to shake hands with glorious old Walt Whitman, then ill and infirm, but hearty in manner and most interesting; and at New York I went to the great prison, The Tombs, to take farewell of my old acquaintance George Francis Train, who was incarcerated for some eccentric outbreak.

On Saturday, the 8th, my good friends of the Lotus Club entertained me at a farewell dinner, over which Whitelaw Reid presided, while among the *convives* were Bret Harte, Edmund C. Stedman, Colonel John Hay, "Petroleum V. Nasby," and Henry M. Stanley, fresh from Africa. In kindliest terms, the president proposed my health, saying that the departure of the English stranger whom they had received a few months ago was felt by every member of the club as the loss of a personal friend.

The next day Mr. Charles Delmonico, one of the proprietors of the famous restaurant, gave a *déjeuner* in my honour, present at which, in addition to those above named, were Judge Brady, Dion Boucicault, Surrogate Hutchings, Major Bundy, and John Brougham.

There were yet two more farewell dinners to be eaten, one at Union League Club, given by Mr. Scribner, another at the Manhattan Club, given by Uncle Sam; and on Wednesday afternoon, the 12th of March, exactly six months after my arrival, my friends Mr. and Mrs. Fithian, Mr. W. A. Seaver, Mrs. Boucicault, Mr. W. H. Marston, Mr. D. Bixby, one of the directors of the Lotus Club, my manager, Mr. Brelsford, and Miss Edgarton, one of the most charming and most popular of lady-lecturers, accompanied me to the Cunard

wharf, and waved their farewells as the *Calabria* steamed slowly off, homeward bound.

So ended my six months in America—the most important period in my life. Six months of tolerably hard work, indeed —far harder than I should now be capable of getting through —but hard work lightened by boundless hospitality, constant courtesy, the most delicate yet genial appreciation. During the whole of my visit I never had an unpleasant word from anyone, I made no enemies, and even "candid friends" were good enough to spare me.*

I went a stranger: I returned leaving troops of friends. I went with a lean purse and vague prospects: I returned with 1,500*l.* and an appointment worth 1,200*l.* a year. Is it any wonder that I should regard with affection and gratitude a land where I had such an emphatically "good time," and from which I received such substantial benefit?

* Much is said of the inquisitiveness of the Americans, and of their constant question-asking. I only recollect once being asked a question. It was at Pittsburgh, where I had lectured on "Princes of the Pen." The next morning at breakfast I was reading the criticisms on myself, when, on the other side of the newspaper, came a finger-fillip which made me start. Looking up, I found a sharp-faced man close upon me. "What did Thackeray die of?" said he abruptly, "that's what I want to know; you didn't tell us that last night."

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE "HERALD'S" TABARD.

1873—1875.

THE homeward voyage in the *Calabria* was cold and cheerless, without incident, save that we lost a man overboard in a storm, and without amusement, save that contained in the remark of a young American gentleman, who, having, after the usual fashion on the last night of the passage, joined in "Auld Lang Syne" and the usual hand-shakings and vagaries thereanent with the rest of the passengers, informed me that he hoped to Heaven he should never see any of them again.

I reached my home on the 23rd of March, and, after forty-eight hours' rest, started off with Dr. Hosmer, the London agent of the *Herald*, to see Mr. Bennett, who was in Paris. The next day I had a long interview with my new employer, and settled all preliminaries. My engagement was for a year certain, and my first duty was to give a full account of the Vienna Exhibition. Mr. Bennett understood that I should like some little time at home after so long an absence, but he wished me to be in Vienna in time to send some preparatory letters descriptive of the progress of the works, the scenes in the city, the arrivals, etc. Then I took my leave and returned home.

I had plenty to do during the next fortnight in looking up and settling affairs which had necessarily fallen into arrear during my absence, in calling on and receiving friends, and in

making arrangements for my new duties. I found in Dr. Hosmer, whom I made it my business to see every day, a shrewd, long-headed, and kindly man, who took considerable trouble with me, explaining to me what Mr. Bennett had in his mind should be done in Vienna, and, what was of far more consequence, giving me much useful advice in regard to the peculiarities of those with whom I was likely to be thrown into contact, and the manner in which I could most easily render myself agreeable.

It seemed that Mr. Bennett had determined to seize upon the opening of the Vienna Exhibition for making a great *coup* with the *Herald*. I was not to be, as I had imagined, the only representative of that journal at Vienna: I was to be associated with Mr. John Russell Young, an American journalist of approved mettle, a gentleman long connected with the *Herald*, and possessing Mr. Bennett's confidence in a remarkable degree; while the German readers of the paper resident in New York—a very large *clientèle*—were to be propitiated by having full accounts of the opening ceremony written for them in their own language by Berthold Auerbach, the well-known author of *Village Tales*, and Madame Muhlbach, also a famous contemporary writer.

More than this, in order to eclipse all his rivals and render competition impossible, the proprietor of the *Herald* had been for some time engaged upon arrangements for securing the transmission of the whole of the articles of the four correspondents—two in English and two in German—by telegraph and cable to New York, so that the description of the various scenes would appear in the next number of the journal, and be read at the breakfast-tables of his constituency on the morning after the occurrence.

This really extraordinary feat would, if properly carried out, entirely distance any attempt made by the other New York journals, which, however, Dr. Hosmer had learned, were going to make their own attempts to distinguish themselves. Thus the *New York Tribune* had engaged the services of Mr. Bayard

Taylor, the eminent traveller, of whom the great Humboldt said he had "never met with a man who had travelled so much and seen so little." The *New York Times* would have as its representative the renowned Dr. W. H. Russell, erst special correspondent of its London namesake; while Colonel Evelyn, a cultivated Southern gentleman of experience and address, was going out for the *New York World*. These were the rivals against whom we, the *Herald* phalanx, should be pitted, and it was, above all, necessary that the utmost secrecy should be observed as regarded our intended proceedings.

Coming down to the *Daily News* office, I learned from my old and valued friend Mr. J. R. Robinson that, in their interest, Mr. Archibald Forbes had already started for Vienna, and that they would be happy to accept any contributions I might send them as supplementary to those of the renowned soldier-scribe, with whom, on my arrival, I should put myself in communication. This were best done, Mr. Robinson suggested, by my sharing, if we were both willing, the lodgings which had already been taken for Mr. Forbes by the *Daily News* Vienna correspondent, and where he understood the accommodation was ample.

Heretofore my acquaintance with Mr. Archibald Forbes had been slight, but I acted upon Mr. Robinson's suggestion, and I have to thank him, in addition to many other benefits, for bringing about a friendship which is to me most valuable and most cherished.

On the 15th of April I left London for Paris, where I was detained for a week by Mr. Bennett, receiving his instructions, going to him daily for more last words, holding long consultations with Mr. Sauer, an *attaché* of the *Herald*, who was to have charge of despatching our telegraph articles, oft "fitting the halter," oft "traversing the cart;" until at last, on Monday, the 21st, I managed to get clear and fairly started for Vienna. Travelling direct *viâ* Munich and Salzburg, I arrived in the empire city at 9.30 on the evening of the second day, and drove to 17 Hegelgasse, where I found Forbes waiting to receive me.

The accommodation which Mr. Robinson's Vienna representative had engaged for us was "ample," indeed, so far as space was concerned. There were two large rooms, but they were at the top of the house; they were poorly furnished, and devoid of anything like comfort; but the experience of a lifetime had enabled Forbes to laugh at crumpled rose-leaves, and, after snow-storms and short-commons on Lake Michigan, the deficiencies of the Hegelgasse were not much trouble to me. My new found comrade and I soon found that, essentially different in many respects, we were excellently suited to each other; our sky-parlour was useful enough for working and sleeping in, and there were plenty of places in the immediate neighbourhood in which we could find fun and amusement.

We were a very happy English and American colony of Government officials, exhibitors, and journalists, all working hard in utmost harmony together during the day, most of us generally dining and passing the evening in company. There were Mr. (now Sir) Philip Cunliffe Owen, then, as ever, most helpful and courteous to all brought in connection with him; Mr. (now Sir) W. Robinson, present Governor of the Windward Islands, then Special Commissioner for the Colonies at the Exhibition; Mr. Trendell, Mr. Ryall, Colonel Michael, and Lieut. Anstey—all more or less representing South Kensington; and Mr. Clark, Mr. F. Barwell the artist, who came out to superintend the hanging of the British collection of pictures; Dr. Ruppener, a German physician from New York; Mr. Bayard Taylor; my colleague Mr. John Russell Young, with whom I formed an intimate alliance, and who is now American Minister in China; my old friend Mr. W. Beatty-Kingston of the *Daily Telegraph*, as vivacious as when I first knew him in his boyhood; Mr. Forbes, and myself. After our long day's tramping over the growing Exhibition, to which I found a most excellent cicerone in Mr. Scott Russell, and after the despatching of our letters, we would dine, a large party, at the Hôtel Taube or the Hôtel Métropole, and give ourselves up to enjoyment.

On the 28th of April the Concordia, the press club of Vienna, entertained their fellow-brethren and visitors at what was really a magnificent banquet, and I had the honour of replying, in German, to the toast of the visitors. Mr. Beatty-Kingston, who is more polyglotic than a Bradshaw's washing-book, also replied, in excellent German, to a toast, and we were told that we had covered ourselves with glory.

On the 30th I had the honour of being presented to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who received me with his usual affability, which stood him in good stead on overhearing a wild Scotchman, correspondent of a Northern journal, with a pocket full of papers, ask Mr. Forbes, whom he did not know, to "prasant him to the Prance."

On the morning of the 1st of May we were all up betimes, hastening to the places we had previously selected as the best for observation purposes. Forbes and I took up our posts in the gallery of the rotunda, where we observed the entire ceremonial, hurrying afterwards to various points which the special acumen of my companion led him to believe would repay a visit. Material complete, I left Forbes and hurried off to the rooms occupied by Mr. Sauer in the Hotel Weisses Ross, where I found Mr. John Russell Young already at work.

My share of the united despatch was two thousand two hundred words. All the four articles went safely through the cable, and were published the next morning, as Mr. Bennett had determined. The success in New York was tremendous, but not greater than the surprise in Vienna, when, our messages being safely despatched and their receipt acknowledged, we told what we had done. Then we found that the other New York journals had secretly carried out some novel plans, but nothing commensurate with ours, for expediting their correspondence. Thus the letter of Mr. Bayard Taylor to the New York *Tribune* was telegraphed to London, there to be written out and despatched by the mail leaving Liverpool that day; the letter of Dr. Russell to the New York *Times* was to be sent by special courier to London; but the extraordinary

feat performed in the interests of the *Herald* rendered these measures useless, for the description of the opening of the Vienna Exhibition, read in New York the next morning, had become stale news and been forgotten long before the other descriptions arrived.

In honour of our exploit, Mr. Russell Young and Mr. Sauer entertained Madame Muhlbach,* her sister and daughter, Mr. Bayard Taylor, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Washburne, son of the American Minister in Paris, and myself, at a very pleasant dinner at the Weisses Ross the next day. The *Times* was represented at the Vienna Exhibition by Mr. Alexandra Innes Shand, a gentleman who has written one or two clever novels. He was not much with us, nor did I see anything scarcely of Dr. Russell, until passing the Exhibition on Thursday, the 8th May, when there had been some special British function, which I had not thought it necessary to attend, I heard the drums roll, saw the sentries present arms, and, looking round expectant of a generalissimo, I saw issue from the doors my old acquaintance Dr. Russell, scarlet-coated, cocked-hatted, waving-plumed, in the full uniform of a British deputy lieutenant.

As we learned that the Prince of Wales was going to Buda-Pesth, Forbes and I thought it advisable to precede him, and started off thither on the 9th of May, on board one of the splendid Danube boats, putting up at the Hôtel Hungaria. We remained at Buda-Pesth some days, went to Margaretten Island, attended the regatta and the races, at both of which the Prince was present, and had a generally good time. I note as an incident that Prince Arthur, now Duke of Connaught, passing through the room where we were at breakfast, spoke to Forbes, and told him that he had been out since 7 A.M., watching the evolutions of some Hungarian cavalry. *Sic itur ad* Field-Marshalship. On the 14th I took leave of my comrade, who was going to remain to write up certain details of the contents of the Exhibition, and returned home.

* Madame Muhlbach, whose real name was Madame Clara Mundt, died the following September.

Within forty-eight hours of my arrival I was telegraphed to go to Paris, as a crisis in political affairs was expected. It came almost immediately. I attended at Versailles every day, and was in the press-gallery of the Chamber during the three *séances* on the 24th May, at the end of which M. Thiers was overthrown, and Marshal MacMahon elected in his place. During that night, and nearly the whole of the next day, I was engaged in telegraphing to America a description of the scenes I had witnessed.

I next donned the *Herald's* tabard on the 16th of June, starting off with Mr. Forbes to Brussels, to meet the Shah of Persia, who was coming on a visit to England *viâ* Ostend. We put up at the Hôtel de l'Europe, where we found several of our journalistic *confrères*. On the 18th we were up at 3.30 A.M., and started at five o'clock for Ostend in the special train provided for his Persian Majesty. Passage from Ostend to Dover was provided for the newspaper correspondents in H.M.S. *Lively*, where we were most graciously received and excellently entertained at luncheon by the officers. A comic scene occurred just before leaving Ostend. We were about to cast off from the pier, when suddenly there appeared, bearing an odd-looking bag, and looking a little seedy with early rising, a gentleman in whom we recognised Mark Twain, but for whom the stolid sailor at the gangway had no recognition.

"I am coming on board," said Twain persuasively.

"No, you ain't," said the stalwart A.B.—"no tramps here."

"What's that you say?" asked Twain.

"No tramps here," repeated the sailor.

"Well, now," said Twain, in his softest and longest drawl, "you are quite right, I am a 'tramp'—I am the *Tramp Abroad*," and then we welcomed him with a shout.

We had a splendid passage, and I can scarcely recollect a finer sight than the eight ironclads drawn up in mid-Channel, which saluted us as we passed between them.

Days and nights were now devoted to the pursuit of the

Persian potentate, whom I followed everywhere, duly recording his doings.* After him I went to an inspection at Hyde Park; to the Floral Hall and the stage of the Italian Opera, to see him entertained in state in his box: to the naval review at Portsmouth, where on board H.M.S. *Glatton*, I nearly had my ears burst by the thunder of her guns; and to entertainments without number, until I hated the Persian apparatus worse even than in my school-days.

On the 4th July I was off to Paris, where the Shah was expected. On the 6th, from a window of Madame de Casseris's splendid mansion, the first on the left in the Champs Elysées as you enter Paris, directly facing the Arc de Triomphe, I witnessed the Shah's entry amid a good deal of ill-concealed ribaldry. "Avez-vous vu le Shah?" was the cry of the hour, which in three days was invariably met with the reply, "Assez du Shah!" No doubt I saw enough of him. I went with his suite to Versailles on one of the hottest days I can remember, doing it all—processions, *déjeuners*, *grandes eaux*, down to the fireworks at night. I grilled on the grand stand at Longchamps, looking at the military review in his honour; and on Saturday, the 12th, I went to a special representation at the old opera-house in the Rue Lepelletier, having to pay, and paying, at the desire of my proprietor, 16*l.* for the stall, in order that the *Herald* might be represented at the grand gala; races at Auteuil, and a fine fête of fireworks at the Trocadéro, the whole extent of the Champs Elysées, from the Arc de Triomphe to the obelisk, being hung with various coloured lamps—a most lovely spectacle—terminated my attendance on the Shah.

A visit to Malvern, to draw a comparison between it and certain American health resorts, and to Cowes during the regatta week, were my next performances; and hearing that the distribution

* A great likeness was said to exist between us. Mark Twain had written to Russell Young from Brussels: "They are selling portraits of Yates here at two francs apiece, and calling him the Shah. What does it mean?"

of prizes was to take place at Vienna on the 18th August, I started thither early in the month, accompanied by my wife. The heat was terrific, and we were not pressed for time; so we journeyed leisurely, stopping at Spa, at Wurzburg, at Munich, and at Salzburg, and settling down in Vienna at the Hôtel Austria—*not* the Österreichischerhof, but a magnificent palace, which as an hotel was born and ended with the Exhibition. There we had a very happy ten days, dining at the Métropole, at Dommeyer's, at Sudbahnhof, and at the Trois Frères; going to entertainments at the Volksgarten and the Neue Welt, listening to Johann Strauss's wonderful band, and the military music which is going all day and all night; and thoroughly enjoying ourselves.

It was Mr. Bennett's wish that I should make a picturesque tour through Germany, describing the places I visited, and it was not a wish that I was likely to baulk. So we went from Vienna to Gmünden, a lovely spot on the Trauensee, where we tarried a little, and then drove through a beautiful country to Ischl (during the drive I found the plot of the "Blue Chamber," the next Christmas Number for *All the Year Round*), and after a week at Ischl, worked our way through Salzburg to my old quarters at the Vier Jahres Zeiten, the Four Seasons Hotel at Munich. There we remained three days, taking a run over to Augsburg, and inspecting the famous cellar of the Drei Mohren; and thence to Nuremberg—full of descriptive matter—where we yet remained another three days; and to Frankfort, where we remained a week. An easy journey down the Rhine by Cologne and Ostend brought us home by the end of September.

Mr. Bennett desiring to have some letters on the state of Irish affairs, I started on the 6th of October for Dublin, where I remained several days. During this time I had long interviews with Mr. A. M. Sullivan, editor of the *Nation;* Mr. Butt, Q.C., M.P., whom I found a most delightful companion; and Sir John Gray, M.P., proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal.*

My old friends Dr. Tisdall, Chancellor of Christchurch; Sanger, head of the Post Office Telegraphs; Nugent Robinson and John Harris, lessee of the Theatre Royal, took care that I should never dine alone. As the guest of one or other of them I met the pleasantest people in the city, including Judge Keogh and Father Healey. And then I started off through the West, passing a day with the Bishop of Cloyne at Fermoy, lunching with The O'Donoghue at Tomies, and finally arriving at Mr. Mitchell-Henry's beautiful place, Kylemore Castle. The result of my tour appeared in the *Herald*, in a series of articles called "Ireland Expectant."

On the 31st October, a filibustering American steamer called the *Virginius*, with a crew of one hundred and thirty-five men, was captured near Jamaica by the Spanish gunboat *Tornado*, and taken to Cuba. On the 7th November, fifty-three of the crew of the captured vessel, including sixteen British subjects, were shot at St. Jago. As soon as this news was known in the United States immense excitement was manifested, and the American Minister at Madrid was, on the 14th, instructed to protest against the executions, as an outrage to humanity and an insult to the American Government. Some of the New York press reared up, and were urgent that a declaration of war be issued at once, and possession taken of Cuba.

On the 15th, Mr. Bennett telegraphed me to go to Paris at once. On my arrival he intimated to me his desire that I should proceed at once to Madrid, and remain there watching the course of events. I started the next day *viâ* Bayonne. On arriving there, I learned that in consequence of the Carlist War the railway connection was interrupted, and that my only chance was to proceed by sea from St. Jean de Luz to Santander, between which places there was some kind of boat service, and thence by rail to Madrid.

Boat service indeed! What I found on arrival at St. Jean de Luz was a wretched old tug called the *Bella*, formerly belonging to North Shields, which had been rechristened

Quatro Amigos, and was doing duty as a passenger-ship. She was slow, she was wet, she was filthy, she was very short-handed, she had no cabin—of course, no steward, no provisions. All I could get to eat during the twelve hours' passage was some filthy sausage and some mouldy bread, and some sour wine to drink, a portion of the sailors' mess, which I bought of them. Of the horrors of the inn at Santander, which called itself the Fonda de Europa, I do not like to think; but there I made the acquaintance of a real Spanish grandee or duke, whose title I forget, but whose courtesy and kindness I shall ever remember. He made things smoother for me than they otherwise would have been, and was most agreeable and useful in our subsequent day's railway journey to Madrid.

One whole day and two nights had to be passed in this horrible hole at Santander; for there was some pretence of quarantine, and on landing our baggage was to be taken from us to the lazaretto, where we went to claim it the next day. It had been thoroughly fumigated, and a portion of it, my bundle of coats and rugs, had been stolen.

Next day we started at 8 A.M., and, after an intolerably wearisome journey of twenty-four hours, arrived at Madrid.

I stayed in Madrid at an excellent house, the Hôtel de Paris, with a remarkable hall-porter named Constantine, for ten days, until the *Virginius* difficulty had settled itself. I saw all the life of the city from my windows, which overlooked the famous Puerta del Sol; I walked and drove, went to the club and to the opera, and a good deal in society. I received much courtesy and hospitality from General Sickles, Minister to the United States, and Mr. (now Sir) Henry Layard, our representative at Madrid, with both of whom I had a previous acquaintance. Dining one night at the British Legation, when were present the Belgian, German, and Italian Ambassadors, I found myself seated next to the latter, and was delighted to recognise in him an old friend in the person of Count Maffei, so long and so well known as an attaché to the Italian Embassy in London.

I went to a bull-fight in an enormous open amphitheatre, calculated to hold twelve thousand persons, every available inch of which was occupied, and where, contrary to my expectations, I was much interested, and did not feel in the least qualmish or upset. I had talks with Señor Castelar and Señor Carvajal, and was perpetually telegraphing to Mr. Bennett and to the *Daily News*.

I had hopes that I might have returned from Spain more pleasantly than I had come, but I found there was no other way to Paris than by the long railway journey to Santander, where my old friend the *Quatro Amigos* was waiting to convey me across. She was announced to sail at six o'clock in the morning, but for some reason or other it was certainly ten before we started, and at St. Sebastian, where we should only have touched, there was a *festa* of some kind or other going on, to which the captain went off in his best clothes, and from which he only returned very late and very drunk. He did not know much about his business at the best of times, and now he seemed to know nothing. Though we started from St. Sebastian in the glow of a magnificent sunset, when within half an hour of our destination we ran into a thick impenetrable white fog, a Spanish Scotch mist, through which one could not see a foot, and which was so penetrating as to get through my Belfast ulster, that had hitherto defied all kinds of even American weather. When we found ourselves in this predicament (there was no light of any kind on board the ship), some of the passengers, seeing the captain's state, began to grow alarmed. Why two of them, pleasant-spoken young gentlemen, brothers, should have come to me, I never could understand. But they came; they implored me to speak to the captain, who, they said, would have some special respect for me as an Englishman in nautical matters, and to induce him to do something—what, they did not suggest. I was willing, I said, but spoke no Spanish. This excuse was overruled by their offering to interpret for me. So we made a little deputation and interviewed the captain, who was

stupidly drunk and impertinent, and of whom we could make nothing.

But our little talk had this effect. While it was taking place I had been listening attentively. My sense of hearing has always been peculiarly good, and though I could not see my hand before my face, I could distinctly hear and recognise the sound of waves breaking on a shore. It was perfectly evident that we were drifting towards land, and might in a few moments be hurled against the rocks which guard that iron-bound coast. This I explained to my companions, and to some other of the passengers who came up at the time; and it had such an effect upon them, that they bodily shook the captain into consciousness and obedience, and caused him to steam away in a perfectly opposite course from that we had been running. I am fully persuaded this saved our lives. We beat about all night, tossing hither and thither, and when daylight came, and the mist rose, found ourselves many miles from the harbour which we should have made twelve hours before. I shall never forget the delight with which I found myself once more on dry land at the little port of St. Jean de Luz.

After a month's interval I received warning that my services would again be required on a foreign mission, and that this time I should be called upon to undertake a longer journey than I had yet performed while in the *Herald's* employ. It is noteworthy that our good American cousins, while always amiably satirising the devotion of the English to their rulers, yet take the greatest interest in the movements of our Royal Family, and Mr. Bennett justly considered that the approaching marriage of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh was a subject which ought to be specially treated for the gratification of the *Herald's* readers; not merely taking into consideration the position of the bridegroom, but the fact that various Grand Dukes, relatives and connections of the bride, had been recently sojourning in New York, and that a certain alliance more or less intimate had recently existed between St. Peters-

burg and the United States. Extremes meet, and the most autocratic and the most democratic of governments have, I suppose, something in common.

At all events, it was Mr. Bennett's wish that I should go to St. Petersburg in good time to be present at the royal wedding; that my description thereof should be full and graphic; and that it should be transmitted by telegraph and cabled, so that it might appear in the *Herald* on the succeeding day.

I was not to have the pleasure of the company of my friend Archibald Forbes on this occasion, as I had at first hoped. We had made arrangements for our journey together, but at the last moment he was despatched as special commissioner for the *Daily News* to inquire into and report upon the progress of the famine just notified as having commenced in Bengal, and had already taken his departure for India. So I started on the 10th January, travelling *viâ* Brussels and Berlin, and finding on board the steamer two distinguished London members of the healing craft—Dr. Alfred Meadows and Mr. Alfred Cooper—who were going to stay with the well-known Mr. Baird of St. Petersburg, and to whom I had introductions. As far as Berlin we travelled pleasantly together, but thence they pursued their route at once, while I awaited the arrival of my friend Mr. Edward Dicey, who was going to represent the *Daily Telegraph* at the wedding, and with whom I had arranged to travel to St. Petersburg.

I spent two days in that dullest of dull cities, Berlin, pleasantly enough, thanks to the cheery hospitality and good company of Mr. Beatty-Kingston, who, as the resident correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* there, knew and was known to everybody. He took me to call upon, among other notable people, Dr. Strousberg, the then supposed millionnaire, who was living in magnificent style. I had not seen the doctor for a very long time—not, indeed, since, sixteen years before, he was living in a very small way in London, owning and editing *Sharpe's London Magazine*, to which I was an occasional contributor. For an article of mine, value, I suppose, about thirty shillings, he was

still in my debt; but I did not remind him of this circumstance, though we spoke of our old literary connection. On the second day Edward Dicey arrived, and after a capital dinner at Hann's restaurant, Unter den Linden, we started at 11 P.M. for St. Petersburg, a saloon carriage with the Prince of Wales and suite forming a portion of the train. At three o'clock the next day we arrived at the Russian frontier, where a special imperial train was in waiting for the Prince and his suite; but, with the disadvantage of having a remarkably drunken Russian officer in the carriage, we pursued our journey all that night and the next day, not arriving at St. Petersburg until 8 P.M. on the 15th.

I made my way to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, which is the home of our Queen's Messengers, and to which I had been recommended by some friends in the Foreign Office. It is kept by Mr. Schmitz, and was, I am bound to say, worthy of the praises it had received. There I found a collection of English and American journalists: Mr. Senior for the *Daily News;* Mr. Tuttle for the *New York Tribune;* Mr. John Furley, of Red Cross and Ambulance fame, for the *Standard;* and Mr. Sydney Hall, the artist, for the *Graphic.* Also in the hotel, and in the next rooms to mine, was Mr. (now Sir) Frederick Napier Broome, Governor of West Australia, who was representing the *Times* on this occasion. During my stay in St. Petersburg I spent most of my time in company with Mr. Broome, whom I found a most agreeable companion, and whose description of the wedding ceremony, telegraphed to the *Times,* was one of the clearest, most succinct, and most graphic bits of special correspondent's work which I have ever seen performed.

On the morning after my arrival I called on Governor Marshal Jewell, the American Minister, a handsome, hospitable, well-bred man, whose acquaintance I had made the previous year at Vienna, where he was a visitor; and upon Mr. Schuyler, the American Consul and well-known author of *Khiva, Peter the Great,* etc., whose thorough acquaintance with the Russian language, literature, manners, etc., was of the greatest assist-

ance to me, and who devoted to me his services in the most friendly manner. I had letters of introduction to Mr. Mitchell, the British Consul-General, from whom I had been told to expect every aid; but Mr. Mitchell was, under peculiar circumstances, away from St. Petersburg at the time, so I called upon the English Ambassador, Lord Augustus Loftus, which was not the same thing.

There was plenty of festivity at St. Petersburg, and genuine hospitality on nearly all sides. I found my medical friends of the steamer, with one Mr. Peter Wilkinson, a shy and retiring student, installed under the friendly roof of Mr. and Mrs. George Baird, from whom I received a cordial welcome and great kindness. Governor and Mrs. Jewell, at the American Legation, made me free of their house and their opera-box, and invited me to a grand reception and ball, given in honour of the occasion, at which Madame Patti and her husband, the Marquis de Caux, were present. Our host of the Hôtel d'Angleterre invited all his foreign visitors to a great excursion to the monastery and cemetery of Sergis, winding up with a grand dinner at Krassnoi-Kabatschoff, a large winter restaurant, where the entertainment was supplemented by dancing, and did not conclude until nearly 2 A.M. Then there were troika drives, tabogganing on the ice-hills in the suburbs, dinners with the Bairds, dinners with Mr. Schuyler, dinners amongst ourselves, suppers at out-town restaurants, where the gipsies sing, a grand ball given by the *noblesse* in honour of the wedding, and a rout at the English Embassy.

I had also plenty of work; for, besides letters to the *Herald*, I was under agreement to send to the *Scotsman*, with which journal I had long had a pleasant connection, such scraps of telegraphic intelligence as I thought might be useful to them; and as on this occasion I had not brought Simpson with me, the work had to be done with my own hand. Then there were preparations for the grand day: calling on Monsieur de Grote, the official who had charge of the accommodation for foreign journalists; interviewing the head of the telegraph bureau, ex-

plaining my requirements, and depositing a sum of money to cover what I imagined would be the extent of my message. At my last interview with Mr. Bennett I had arranged, instead of wiring to London and through the Anglo-American cable, to send my message direct to the Paris office of the *Herald*, and that it should be thence transmitted by the French cable. I knew that the London correspondence would sufficiently occupy the London wires to make the safe transmission of my message a matter of doubt.

The marriage ceremony took place at noon on the 23rd of January at the Winter Palace, and was a most magnificent sight. The peculiarity of the Russian costume, the combination of sumptuous velvet and magnificent furs with a vast number, among the ladies, of superb diamonds, was very striking, nor did I ever see such a mass of uniforms. Looking down from the gallery especially devoted to the correspondents, the only two persons not in uniform I could see amongst the crowd of people thronging the aisle were the American diplomatists. After the ceremonies in the Winter Palace of the Russian Church, the Anglican wedding service was performed by Dean Stanley in the Hall Alexander, a place only remarkable for its very cramped proportions and poor decorations. It was here that the Empress-Mother, being overcome with emotion, had to sit down, and nearly fainted at the conclusion of the service when the newly-married pair came to salute her. In the stampede from this place the crush was terrific, and there were nearly some fatal accidents. From our position we could look down upon the crowd, which, with its variegated uniforms—scarlet, lilac and silver, white and gold, the grand kaftans, coloured turbans, and flowing robes from Bokhara and Samarcand, dotted here and there with enormous cuirassiers of the Imperial Guard, their silver helmets mounted by golden eagles—formed an extraordinary combination of colour and brilliancy. Old General Kauffmann, the hero of Khiva, an immensely popular favourite at the time, got entangled in this crowd, and, being short and feeble, might have

come to serious grief had not his position been seen by the Czarevitch, who plunged headlong into the mass and personally rescued the old gentleman.

It was four o'clock before, terribly faint and weary, I got back to my hotel, and had to set to work at once. My orders were to send about twelve hundred words; a message of such an indicative character and so framed that it could be amplified by those who received it. By 5.15 I sent off eight hundred and eighteen words; and, three-quarters of an hour later, another three hundred and eighty-six words, making, in all, twelve hundred and four words. I was, of course, particularly anxious as to the fate of my work, and not reassured until the following morning, when I received a telegram from Paris, signed by Mr. Grenville Murray, Mr. Russell Young, and Mr. Sauer, announcing that the whole message had gone safely through, and offering me hearty congratulations. I suppose they were deserved, for a leading article in the *Herald*, printed simultaneously with the message the next morning, said of my account that, "in point of terseness and vigour of language, in vivid portraiture of one of the greatest spectacles of the century, it had scarcely, if ever, been equalled in our journalism;" and I received a special letter of thanks from Mr. Bennett.

I also, on the same evening, telegraphed three hundred words to the *Scotsman*.

I remained yet a few days at St. Petersburg, and then returned home, with Dr. Meadows as my pleasant travelling companion. This was the last expedition of any moment which I undertook at the instance of the *Herald* proprietary, though I remained in their service for more than a year afterwards. I attended whatever of importance was going on in London; I wrote a weekly letter descriptive of the ordinary course of affairs here. I sent book and picture notices, and wrote on current topics of literature and art; I went to Ireland once or twice—on the last occasion in the spring of 1875, when I interviewed John Mitchell, the patriot convict, who had

just returned from America, who was in extremely feeble health, and who died within a few days of my seeing him.

But by this time my own journal *The World*, which I had started eight or ten months previously, had so grown in importance as to warrant my looking upon it as being fairly established, and it made such claims upon my time that it would have been impossible for me to have left London for more than two or three days, while it was equally impossible to allow Mr. Bennett to be under the impression that he still had me entirely at his command. I therefore placed myself in communication with him, announcing my wish to be relieved of the appointment which I had now held for more than two years, and giving my reasons for tendering my resignation. Mr. Bennett met me in the kindest and most liberal way, thanked me for the services which I had rendered to his journal, and enclosed a cheque for three months' salary, "in lieu," as he said, "of a quarter's notice;" though there was nothing in our agreement to render such a payment obligatory on his part.

And thus pleasantly closed an engagement, during the fulfilment of which I enjoyed much happiness, and greatly extended my knowledge of the world.

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE WORLD."

WHILE engaged in Mr. Bennett's service I could not avoid the feeling that the work which I was called upon to do for the *New York Herald*, though well remunerated, pleasant, exciting, and amusing, was, so far as its physical requirements were concerned, more suitable for a man in the vigour of youth than one who had attained his middle-age. While there is nothing so pleasant as travelling for pleasure, starting when you like, stopping when you like, and diversifying your route according to your inclination, there is little more harassing than being at the beck and call of anyone, liable to be sent to the ends of Europe at an hour's notice, and nothing more fatiguing than a monotonous journey of many hours for purely business purposes.

In the year 1873, without taking into account the enormous journeying I had gone through in the States and my voyage over the Atlantic, I crossed and recrossed the English Channel sixteen times between the beginning of May and the end of December, and was only at home two months out of the twelve. The succeeding year opened with my visit to St. Petersburg, on the occasion of the Duke of Edinburgh's wedding, and though there was no actual prospect of my being called away so often, at any time the contingency might arise. I began to feel, therefore, with the brickmaker intruded upon by Mrs. Pardiggle's family, that I "wanted an end to this." But I did not

see how conveniently it could be brought about. When I first entertained the idea of seeking employment from Mr. Bennett, it was to act in the capacity of his London correspondent, but I was in no position then to decline the travelling and general European work which he desired me to undertake; moreover, such an appointment as I held, with an excellent salary attached to it, was very seldom to be obtained. To a young unmarried man no more delightful berth could have been offered, and I felt that it would be madness in me to make even a suggestion of an alteration in the work until I had arranged for myself an equivalent on which I could fall back.

These were not the only motives by which I was prompted to overhaul my resources and see whether anything could be made of them. The demon Doubt, under whose dominion I had passed so many anxious hours before resigning my situation in the Post Office, had again got me in his grip. How long should I continue to hold this new appointment? Would my health last? Should I be able to give equal satisfaction to my employer when the novelty of my style had ceased to interest his readers? Were not the advantages, many and great as they were, of my position almost counterbalanced by the necessity of my frequent absences from home, and what was virtually the break-up of my domestic life? Finally, what could I do to insure a decent livelihood unaccompanied by the drawbacks of my then mode of life?

Now, I had for years had a feeling, confirmed by indisputable experience, that the contributions which, during my long apprenticeship to journalism, I had supplied to various periodicals with which I had been connected had been of undoubted service to my employers. From the early days of the *Weekly Chronicle* to the last "Flâneur" *feuilleton* in the *Morning Star* my work had invariably attracted notice, comment, and criticism, favourable or unfavourable, according to the taste and temper of the commentator, but it had never gone unregarded, and had always been thought worth the money it earned by those who paid for it. Light and flippant, wanting in dignity and

tone, it may have been; personal in the inoffensive sense of the word it undoubtedly was; but it was, I hope, neither vulgar, scurrilous, malignant, nor vindictive; above all, it was amusing, and that was a quality which, to the majority of newspaper proprietors and editors of those days, was stamped with the mark of the Beast. With their readers it was different; to them the tiniest thread-like rivulet of fancy in the midst of a dreary desert of fact was acceptable, and eagerly seized upon.

So, possessing this belief in myself, I had, after much laborious excogitation, come to the idea that a new and original journal, wholly differing in style from anything then existent, might have a tolerable chance of success. I never for one moment thought that frivolous chatter of the kind I have indicated, however well done, was sufficient in itself to constitute a newspaper—that is an idea which has been proved to be erroneous many times both before and since the epoch of which I am writing. The chatter, in itself bald and bad, has been unsustained by anything good; but my opinion was that all the light and gossipy news of the day, properly winnowed and attractively set forth, backed by good political and social articles, written in a bolder, freer, and less turgid style than that in which such topics were commonly handled, with first-rate dramatic, literary, and musical criticism, all laid on different lines from those then existing, would form a journalistic amalgam which would most probably hit the public taste. Years before, while in the service of the Post Office, I had conceived and cherished this scheme; but in those days I had not merely no capital, but no time to devote to its exploitation. But it was destined to be carried out, and it was—thus:

Some six or seven years before, at the dinner-table of Mr. Bellew, I had made the acquaintance of Mr. Grenville Murray, of whom I had often heard much from Dickens and others, and whom I consequently regarded with great interest. A man in person small, with dark complexion, and curly hair beginning to turn grey; in manner vivacious and fascinating, glib of speech, felicitous in illustration, and conversable on all

topics. After our introduction he came round and seated himself by me, and we talked earnestly for an hour. I had, of course, no idea of how my future was to be influenced by my new acquaintance, and when not listening to him I was occupied in thinking of his past.

Born with a bar sinister, but always understood to be the son of an English nobleman, whose character and surroundings were supposed to be depicted in his novel of *Young Brown*, Grenville Murray received an appointment in the Foreign Office, and was sent out as attaché to Lord Westmorland at Vienna. According to the current story, he had privately obtained Lord Palmerston's permission to act as correspondent for the *Morning Post* in the city to which he was accredited, but his letters having miscarried, the secret was discovered, and, though Mr. Murray was not dismissed, he was, at Lord Westmorland's indignant protest, recalled from Vienna. He was then appointed attaché to the British Embassy at Constantinople, of which Sir Stratford Canning was the head, and a rumour of the Vienna escapades having, it is supposed, reached that able but irritable martinet, Mr. Murray was sent temporarily to fill the vice-consulship at Mitylene, which was looked upon as quasi-banishment. From this retreat he wrote and sent to *Household Words*, then just established, a series of admirable sketches of Greek and Turkish life and character, called "The Roving Englishman," which were immediately published and eagerly read.

But for a certain limited portion of the public they had another interest, of which Dickens, who liked them greatly, was wholly unaware. Under the title of Sir Hector Stubble, Murray had drawn a merciless but unmistakable caricature of the head of his embassy, Sir Stratford Canning; so unmistakable was the portrait that the great man's enemies, and naturally all his friends, fearful lest by any chance the arrow aimed at his *amour propre* should miss its mark, immediately forwarded him copies of the number containing this article, so that on the arrival of the English mail of that day at Constantinople, the

usual bags of the Foreign Office were found supplemented by an enormous number of newspaper sacks, all filled with copies of *Household Words*. Sir Stratford Canning was furious, and when he discovered who was his assailant, his rage knew no bounds. He determined that Mr. Murray should be condemned to perpetual exile at Mitylene; but the vice-consulship was soon after filled up, and it was necessary to find some new duties for the unwelcome attaché. For some time he was employed in carrying despatches between London and Constantinople, but as it was evident at the Foreign Office that the breach between him and Sir Stratford Canning could never be healed, Mr. Murray received an appointment as Consul-General at Odessa.

Thither he proceeded, and there he remained for ten years, jeopardising his position and rendering himself a nuisance in the eyes of his official superiors in Downing Street by waging a constant warfare with the English merchants in the place in regard to certain fees which he claimed as his due, and the payment of which they resisted. Finally, Lord Derby, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, being appealed to, gave his judgment against the Consul-General's claim, thereby earning the undying hostility of the implacable Murray, who, throwing up his appointment and coming back to England, resumed his journalistic pursuits, in the discharge of which he never lost an opportunity of attacking his foe.

When I met Grenville Murray at Mr. Bellew's table, our chat was for the most part on undefined subjects, although I think I mentioned to him the pleasure with which I had read "The Roving Englishman," and told him the story, related to me by Wills, of the arrival of the newspaper sacks of *Household Words* at the Constantinople Embassy, at which Murray laughed much, professing to hear it for the first time. Afterwards, in the course of a gastronomic discussion, he invited Mrs. Yates and myself to an afternoon tea at his chambers in the Albany, where he promised us extra delicious coffee and

Neapolitan ice supplied and prepared by his Italian valet. This promise was more than specifically performed.

I saw Mr. Murray half a dozen times after this; but though he was then generally credited with the editorship, and indeed with most of the productions, of the *Queen's Messenger*, a bitterly satirical journal of those days, he never admitted the fact to me. On one or two occasions when the newspaper was named, he spoke of it as though it were the property of a syndicate, for whom he acted as agent. In June, 1869, there appeared in the *Queen's Messenger* an article entitled "Bob Coachington Lord Jarvey," which was considered by the present Lord Carington to cast aspersions on his deceased father. Acting upon the current impression that Grenville Murray was the person responsible for the paper, Lord Carington waited outside the Conservative Club, of which Mr. Murray was a member, and assaulted him as he emerged.

A charge of assault was preferred against Lord Carington by Mr. Murray, which was heard on the 7th of July at the Marlborough Street police-court. Here is what appears in reference to the affair in Irving's *Annals of Our Time:* "After much wrangling Mr. Murray denied the authorship of the article, but declined to answer the question relating to his connection with the paper. A number of letters, articles in manuscript, and corrected proofs of articles were shown to him, but he declined to say whether they were in his handwriting. He admitted that he had written some articles in the *Queen's Messenger*, but said he would rather have cut off his right hand than have written others. Lord Carington was ultimately bound over to keep the peace in reference to one summons, and committed to trial for the second, charging assault. At the close of the proceedings a disgraceful struggle took place between the friends of the contending parties for the possession of a box containing papers belonging to the *Queen's Messenger*, and said to have been improperly transferred to the keeping of Lord Carington's solicitor, Mr. Newman."

Ten days later Lord Carington preferred a charge of perjury

against Mr. Grenville Murray in connection with his denial of the authorship of certain articles in the *Queen's Messenger*. The case was remanded, Mr. Murray being admitted to bail in heavy recognisances. On the 29th July, the day of remand, Mr. Murray failed to appear, and—I again quote Irving—"the police magistrate refusing to give credence to the plea of sudden attack of illness in Paris, whither he was said to have gone to see his son, his recognisances were ordered to be estreated, and a warrant issued for his apprehension."

Grenville Murray never set foot on English shore again. He established himself in Paris, in delightful quarters in the Rue de l'Université in the Faubourg St. Germain, where he carried on, it is believed, a complete literary manufactory, all the work being suggested, supervised, and occasionally retouched by the master hand. Currency is given to this story by the impossibility of all the work credited to him simultaneously springing from one brain and one hand. He was at once novelist, descriptive essayist, leader-writer, and compiler of statistical research in a dozen different quarters. He contributed regularly to the *Daily News*, he sent seven or eight closely printed columns, dealing with all kinds of subjects, every week to the *New York Herald*, of which, at my introduction, he had been appointed Paris correspondent. His sketches of Parisian and French provincial life in the *Pall Mall Gazette* were imbued with special knowledge, and formed most delightful reading. He wrote regularly for *Vanity Fair*. His novel, *The Member for Paris*, had a large circulation; and when "Young Brown" appeared in the pages of the *Cornhill*, it caused an immediate sensation. Besides his English and American work, he was believed to be a regular contributor to the *Débats*, and an occasional correspondent of the *Figaro* and other Parisian papers.

Such was the man to whom, having always experienced at his hands the greatest courtesy and politeness, with a certain amount of deference, certainly not due from a writer so much older and abler than myself, I one day, in crossing the Place

de la Concorde, explained my dreams of "what might have been" had I only possessed a little capital and a little courage. He had been shambling along by my side in his usual common straw hat and shabby shooting-coat—"one comfort," he used to say, "one comfort in living amongst these frogs"—he always spoke of Frenchmen as frogs—"is that no one cares a rap what kind of clothes you wear"—but when I ceased speaking he stopped, sat down on the edge of one of the fountain basins, and looking at me with his always keenly bright eyes, rapidly asked me some half-dozen questions, to which I replied. We resumed our walk, and went to his quarters in the Rue de l'Université. Then he ran over all I had said, asked whether it would be agreeable to me to take him as a partner in the suggested enterprise, of the success of which he had no doubt, suggested that certain inquiries should be made by me on my return to England, whither I was going the next day, and sent me off in the happiest frame of excited hope. The question of capital he had disposed of in his usual impulsive way: we could each produce some two or three hundred pounds, he said, to make a start, and before that was expended our combined efforts would have speeded our venture far on the high-road to success.

It may be imagined that I returned home with my mind sufficiently full, and that there was no lack of subjects for domestic discussion. The first question was, of course, the amount of money to be hazarded. Mr. Murray had said two or three hundred pounds, and it was finally agreed that my contribution should not exceed the latter sum. I had also promised to make inquiries respecting printer, publishing offices, contributors, etc. The first matter was easily disposed of. I obtained an estimate from Messrs. Robson & Sons, with whom I had become connected in the year 1860 as printers of *Temple Bar*, and by whom every novel of mine, with the exception of one, had been printed since. A publisher and publishing office were found through the medium of Mr. Goodlake, for so many years the printer of the *Times*, who

recommended me to apply to Mr. Arnold, of 86, Fleet Street, whom I found occupying the very premises in which, twenty years previously, my first book had been issued by Mr. Bogue. As to the question of contributors, I made a mental list of persons I intended to apply to; but I thought that could well stand over until we had made some further progress in our arrangements. Meanwhile, requested by Mr. Murray to find a title, I proposed *The World: a Journal for Men and Women*, which he immediately accepted.

When I returned to Paris I found Grenville Murray more enthusiastic than ever on the subject of our proposed enterprise. "Together," he was pleased to say, "we could carry anything before us." There was to be no "journalese," such as was to be found in every newspaper; all was to be fresh, original, and piquant. We had gone into the question of finance, and thought that a capital of five hundred pounds would be quite enough to start with: this was to be made up by two equal contributions on his part and mine of two hundred and fifty pounds, and the result was to be our joint property. As to the question of editorship, that could only be settled in one way. It was impossible for him to come to England, where the paper was to be published, and therefore it must be edited by me. "You are to be a despot, my dear fellow," he said pleasantly, "with whole, sole, undivided control." I remember smiling as he said this, for though I was considerably the younger, yet he was, or seemed to be, much more sanguine, and I thought it a good opportunity to say something which had been in my mind.

I told him then that while I had long believed him to be the ablest journalist in Europe, I was also convinced of one thing—that the ill-treatment which he imagined he had received at the hands of Lord Derby and some of the subordinate officials in Downing Street had had such an effect upon his mind that it was as impossible for him to keep damaging allusions to them out of his writings as it was for Mr. Dick to keep "mention of King Charles the First's head" out of his

memorial. I took occasion to say that persistent and reiterated attacks of the kind would naturally militate against the success of the new venture in certain important quarters, and I implored him to guard against falling into the snare.

Murray laughed good-naturedly at the "Mr. Dick" allusion, declaring that all ill-feeling against the persons I had named had died out, and that he was perfectly to be trusted in the matter; but, he added, even if he were to be seduced into such a lapse, my full powers as editor would enable me to deal despotically with the affair.

All these various points duly taken into consideration and discussed, we had, we thought, sufficient material for an agreement, which was sketched out, all the points being enumerated, with the further proviso that in the event of any serious difference of opinion arising between the two persons in the conduct of the paper, reference should be made to an arbitrator—either Mr. W. H. Wills, formerly of *Household Words*, or Mr. J. R. Robinson being requested to act in that capacity—the arbitrator's decision to be final.

When I returned to England I brought back with me a draft prospectus of the new paper, the whole of which, with the exception of one paragraph, was Grenville Murray's idea. I subjoin it:

THE WORLD,

A JOURNAL FOR MEN AND WOMEN,

Will be published on WEDNESDAY* *the 8th of* JULY 1874, *and every succeeding Week.*

Some men of letters propose to create a periodical of a sort hitherto unknown in this great country.

They expect an ample remuneration for their work, and will give the public solid value for its money.

The price of the phenomenon now introduced to society will be sixpence.

* My selection of Wednesday as day of publication was very lucky; for on Saturday, the alternative day, Messrs. Smith's bookstalls are entirely occupied.

The World will be an amusing chronicle of current history, divested of the nonsense which has hitherto stuck like treacle to public business, so that apparently it could not be touched with clean hands.

The World will contain a summary of everything worth notice in literature, art, and society; and will, for a just consideration, print advertisements in a new and striking form.

Politics, and even Parliamentary proceedings deserving of attention, will sometimes be discussed from any point of view from which there is a clearer prospect, or less of fog, than is usual. They will be good-naturedly reproved from that queer eminence to which they have been hoisted by official vanity and departmental advertisements; they will be restored in safety to the proper place which good sense assigns them in the concerns of nations; they will be made intelligible to rational persons, over whose minds at present they have little authority and less influence.

The World will recognise women as a reasonable class of the community, whose interests should be equitably considered, and their errors explained without levity or hysterics.

An Acrostic will be composed weekly to promote female education, and be printed conjointly with an elegant Essay suitable for mature ladies of quality.

The World will publish that rarest of all things—candid reviews of good books, good plays, good pictures, and discoveries in science; treating them as the natural expression of the highest form of intellect, and actually bestowing honest praise on living genius.

The World will give the latest intelligence from the Turf, the Hunting-field, and the Stock Exchange, and will vastly surprise those who are wont to look upon Sport and City in their conventional aspect.

The World will publish entertaining Fictions without any admixture of twaddle; and the first of its serial tales will be a Novel of Society, by a New Writer born in Grosvenor Square expressly to delight Belgravia.

The World has pleasant tidings for the Court and the Aristocracy. It will receive contributions from people of rank who know anything worth communicating, and who can write a legible hand. The spelling and grammar of nobility will be corrected; and manuscripts, when done with, will be discreetly buried at midnight

during a thunderstorm, in order that the capital sin of possessing intellect may never be brought home to anybody.

All Articles which appear in *The World* will be paid for at the highest rates current for the best literature.

Accounts with contributors to *The World* will be settled every week; and it is confidently believed that this inducement alone will be sufficient to secure a steady literary support from the great officers of State in a land whose peers and officials are among the keenest of customers.

Fair in its criticism, plain in its language, honourable in its intentions, written throughout by gentlemen and scholars—such will be *The World*, which is now presented to the public as an experiment wholly new in journalism.

This prospectus I had at once printed and circulated amongst the various newspaper offices and such people as I thought interested by it. It was generally voted very clever and extremely impudent. The prospectus was also inserted as an advertisement in the *Saturday Review*, the *Spectator*, and a few other journals, but I do not think I have ever paid more than seventy pounds for advertising *The World* from its first number to the present day.

Now as to the contributors. Some six or seven years previously, a young gentleman, Mr. T. H. S. Escott, then fresh from Oxford, had called upon me at the Post Office with a letter of introduction from Tom Hood, and had intimated his desire for furnishing me with some articles for *Temple Bar*. These articles had been written and approved of; and though I had not seen much of my young friend for some time, I had sufficient remembrance of his special gifts to induce me to beg for his collaboration in my new venture. I had also sent a prospectus to Mr. Henry Labouchere, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, and whose services as a literary free-lance might, I thought, be utilized. Some days after, I saw Mr. Labouchere on the Cup Day at Ascot, seated on the box of a coach. I asked him if he had heard from me, and he said, "O, yes," adding that "he thought the programme was very funny."

"But," I said, "will you help us in carrying it out—will you be one of us?"

"You don't mean to say," he replied, "that you actually mean to start a paper of the kind set forth?"

I told him most assuredly we did, and that we wanted his assistance. He laughed more than ever, and said he would let me know about that. A few days after I heard from him, proposing to write a series of City articles, which he actually commenced in the second number.

Amongst my earlier contributors were Dr. Birkbeck Hill, whose literary work is now well known and highly esteemed; the Earl of Winchilsea, who through the first three months of our existence obliged me with some excellent articles on racing and the turf generally; M. Camille Barrère, an old acquaintance of mine, now French Minister in Egypt, then an exile in England, a man, as he has subsequently shown, of great ability, who writes our language with as much precision as he speaks it. His first article, on the "Communists in London," was full of novel and interesting information. Valuable assistance was also received from Mrs. Lynn Linton, who contributed to the first number an article entitled "Jezebel *à la Mode*," written very much in her well-known "Girl of the Period" style; F. I. Scudamore, who from our commencement almost to the day of his death was a most welcome contributor, and whose "Songs of the Session" are amongst his very best work. Mr. Archibald Forbes and Mr. J. Comyns Carr soon rallied to the standard. Mr. Herman Merivale's contributions were in verse, though he afterwards sent me a series of prose articles; and Mr. Mortimer Collins, completely seizing upon the ideas intended to be conveyed in the prospectus, distilled them for the first number into a sparkling set of verses, which I am tempted to give:

"THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

A TRILOGY.

Lo, here our banner unfurled,
  We are ready for tourney or revel;
What in the world says the World
  Of the World and the Flesh and the Devil?

THE WORLD.

The World! God made it, and fair it is;
Ah, why do we spoil it—why?
It is not merely the splutter of fizz,
Or the lurid light of a wicked eye;
'Tis the world of men who are true and strong,
The world of women both sweet and fair;
And the men of the world who sway the throng
Breathe healthful air.

The World! where Science and Art alert
Have ample space of elbow-room;
Where Fashion, the gay minx, comes to flirt,
Chasing away all forms of gloom;
Where Genius easily finds his way,
And leads the life of the rapid hour;
For the World is wiser grown to-day,
And bends to power.

Beautiful World! we will mirror you—
Catch every beauty, each gay caprice,
The ladies' latest changeable hue,
The fanciful follies that cannot cease,
Political epigram, opera-song,
The poet's madness, the bride's soft tear:
All these things to the World belong—
You'll find them here.

THE FLESH.

Youth, tell thy dream: is it indeed a glory
To waste thy appetite on husks of swine?
Read in an ancient book an old, old story;
True, though some cavillers deem it not divine.

Youth, in this day of fastness, wildly fast is;
The model editor who writes for youth
Follows (a long way off) Ecclesiastes,
And modestly attempts to preach the truth.

He says, 'Although in thee the innate sin burn
Which bothered me and many other wights,
Don't spend your mornings gloating over Swinburne,
And don't stay out so very late o' nights.

You haven't got Jack Falstaff's sterling sinew ;
These weaker days have made you weakling cubs :
If to stay up to midnight you continue,
I'll hint to Mr. Cross to close the Clubs.'

Thus the new Solomon : *experto crede*,
His prototype was caught in many a mesh ;
Youth, if you'd not be permanently seedy,
Eschew the gross temptations of the flesh.

THE DEVIL.

The Devil of old was Lucifer,
Bearer of light to the central Throne ;
He set rebellious fire astir ;
He fell with a groan.

Now Lucifer seems to have had his day ;
He's out of the firm, and takes his ease,
And his junior partner comes in to play—
Mephistopheles.

The Devil who simpers, and sneers, and grins,
Reviews in the *Saturday*, does his worst
To make great crimes of our smaller sins—
A Fiend accurst.

Let us kick him out, with an easy laugh,
From the rooms where our books and friends we meet,
And our afternoons of classic chaff,
Make life complete.

We'll have our picnics and kettledrums,
And lazy loiterings under the trees :
Be off, poor fiend, to the World's back slums,
Mephistopheles."

When we were eight months old a powerful reinforcement came to me in the person of Mr. Henry W. Lucy, whose admirable parliamentary sketches, "Under the Clock," instantly commanded attention. For a year the dramatic criticisms were my work; but as soon as Mr. Dutton Cook was free from the engagement which he then held for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he was good enough to relieve me of the duties, which he dis-

charged until his lamented death just two years ago. Mr. E. S. Dallas joined us early, and was a frequent and valued contributor. The first serial novel in *The World*, "A Decree Nisi," was written by me; my successors have been Mr. Wilkie Collins, Messrs. Rice and Besant with "The Golden Butterfly," perhaps their *chef d'œuvre*, Miss Braddon, Major Hawley Smart, Mrs. Forrester, and others. *The World*, too, supplies the only instance in my memory in which a journal was honoured by the *Times* with the quotation of an article in full, the name of the publication being given with a couple of laudatory lines of introduction. The article in question was called "Modern Cavalry," and was written by Colonel Valentine Baker.

But I am unduly advancing my story. The first number of *The World* appeared on the 8th July, 1874, and was not received with any strongly emphasised welcome. Its sale, indeed, was very limited, and its advertisements were practically nil. Mr. Grenville Murray had a strong belief in the *réclame* system so common in France, by which an advertiser's name and object for advertising are judiciously mixed up with a pointed anecdote or telling sketch. He was most anxious that this system should be introduced by us, and it was accordingly tried, but proved the direst failure. The British commercial interests failed to see the point of the joke, and looked upon the mixing up of practical trade announcements and insinuating fiction as "bare-faced impudence" and "regular humbug," so that after a trial of two or three weeks they were abandoned.

But no other advertisers came in their places, and for several weeks the sale of the numbers was infinitesimally small. At the same time all judges of journalism allowed the new aspirant to be bright, clever, and entirely original. Mr. Grenville Murray's large knowledge of men and cities found scope in his "Portraits in Oil," and in his articles commenting on current events abroad and at home; Mr. Escott's political articles, pointed and incisive, at once made their mark; while Mr. Labouchere was dealing with City matters in a way in which they had never been dealt with before, and ruthlessly attacking and

denouncing Mr. Sampson, the City editor of the *Times*, whose position and virtue had hitherto been considered impregnable.

All these features, with the excellence of the paper and printing and general appearance of the journal, received due appreciation from our provincial *confrères* and the "trade;" but as yet they seemed to have made no impression on the public. We were in the desperate position of having a good article to sell without the power of making that fact known; nine-tenths of the newspaper-buying public had absolutely no knowledge of our existence; and, although my partner and I had each subscribed another hundred pounds to the capital fund, a couple of thousand pounds would not have been too much to have expended in judicious advertising.

At last, and just in the nick of time, we obtained the requisite public notice, and without paying anything for it. A stock-broker, a member of the Stock Exchange, who conceived himself likely to be attacked for certain practices by Mr. Labouchere in the City article, threatened to horsewhip that gentleman should such observations appear, and Mr. Labouchere had the would-be assailant brought before the Lord Mayor for threatening to commit a breach of the peace. The case was really a trivial one, and it was settled by the defendant being bound over in sureties for his good behaviour. But it had been argued at full length, each side being represented by eminent lawyers. Mr. Thesiger, Q.C., afterwards a Lord Justice of Appeal, appeared for the defendant, and Mr. George Lewis for Mr. Labouchere. A great deal was said about *The World* and its determination to purge Capel Court of all engaged in iniquitous dealings, and all that was said was reported at length in the daily papers, and *verbatim* in our next issue. The effect was instantaneous; the circulation rose at once, and the next week showed a very large increase of advertisements.

More satisfactory still was the result of another legal case. A series of articles exposing the tricks of West End usurers, stripping them of their fancy titles, and giving their real names and occupations, had created a considerable amount of interest,

and led to much correspondence between *The World* office and parents and others in charge of youth. Two of the fraternity, whom it is not now necessary to name, instituted proceedings against *The World* for libel. The case came on in the Guildhall police-court before Alderman Sir Thomas Gabriel, the plaintiffs being represented by Mr. Montagu Williams and Mr. Douglas Straight, while Mr. George Lewis appeared for the journal. Mr. Montagu Williams had not held the Treasury briefs in those days, and was much better in defence, to which he was more accustomed, than attack, while Mr. Douglas Straight had nothing to do but shake his head in a Lord Burleigh-like manner at the impressive observations of his leader.

The case was adjourned; and on the second day Mr. Serjeant Parry struggled earnestly and impressively, but without the least chance of success, to convince the presiding magistrate and the public, which thronged the court, with the sense of our iniquity. On the contrary, Mr. George Lewis's keen cross-examination had dragged forth the disclosure of such damaging facts on behalf of the plaintiffs that it seemed to be generally admitted that in commenting on their proceedings *The World* deserved encouragement rather than reprobation. The case was dismissed, and we left the court amid hearty cheers from the persons who were assembled outside.

The value of the proviso in my agreement with Mr. Murray, referring matters in dispute to an arbitrator, was proved soon after this. In a few weeks Mr. Murray, always writing splendidly, began to attack his old foes Lord Derby and Mr. Bidwell of the Foreign Office. I ventured a remonstrance, and the attacks ceased, to be resumed very shortly with increased virulence. Exercising my power, I struck out some strong expressions; Mr. Murray protested. A very strong article I suppressed. Then ensued a long correspondence; and as the impossibility of continuing the "dual control" seemed to be evident, we agreed that Mr. Murray should retire from the partnership, the amount to be paid him for his original advance (350*l.*) being, in the then circumstances and prospects of the

journal, assessed by a professional valuer at 3,000*l.* From the beginning of 1875 *The World* has been my sole property, and under my sole management.

Undoubtedly one of the most attractive features of *The World* is the series of "Celebrities at Home," of which nearly four hundred specimens have already appeared, a large proportion of them written by Mr. B. H. Becker, and which seems to be practically inexhaustible. Granting the correctness of Sir Henry Taylor's assertion, that "the world knows nothing of its greatest men," it had always been my idea that an introduction might be acceptable to both parties. The silly idea that any system of espionage would be practised, that admission into houses would be unduly obtained, and that there would be a general disclosure of skeletons in cupboards, was at once set at rest. By the regulations laid down and insisted upon from the first, that no person should be made the subject of one of these articles without his or her consent having been previously obtained, and without full liberty, if they wished it, to inspect the article in proof before it was published—with these safeguards, and with a jealous care that the spirit with which they had been written should always be maintained, it appears to me that, for the historian of the future, these articles will supply a want which must have been keenly felt by the Macaulays and the Froudes; will enable our descendants to picture to themselves all the exact social surroundings and daily lives and labours, the habits and manners, the dress and appearance, of the men of mark in the present day, such as is inadequately afforded even by the diaries of Evelyn and Pepys, or the letters of Walpole. In these articles are discharged the functions of a Boswell, with a thousand patrons instead of one; and as the wondrous biography written by the Laird of Auchinleck interests us less from being the record of Johnson's sledge-hammer dicta or profound philosophical opinions, than as the description of his daily life and personal habits, the strange household nourished by his charity, his tricks of post-touching and tea-drinking, his general method of

tossing and goring all those differing from him in opinion, so I think it will be found that the historian of the future will turn aside from volumes of Hansard and files of polemical journals to find closer information about his heroes in these descriptive essays.

With the exception of our Most Gracious Majesty, there is scarcely a personage of importance in the present day who does not find a niche in this series. On applying to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, intimating that the task of sketching him in his Sandringham home would, if permission were granted, be confided to Mr. Archibald Forbes, the Prince accorded immediate consent, with the remark that he had pleasant personal acquaintance with Mr. Forbes, and could well trust himself in his hands. On the appearance of the article, his Royal Highness was pleased to express his full approval of it. Introduced by Sir Arthur Sullivan to the Duke of Edinburgh, I received his Royal Highness's gracious permission for his inclusion in the series; and the Duke of Cambridge was also good enough to allow himself to sit as a subject.

The leading members of nearly every reigning family in Europe, presidents and statesmen of the French and American Republics, army and navy officers, poets, peers, publicists, leaders in all kinds of sport, members of the Bar and lights of the pulpit, owners, jockeys, and trainers of racehorses, nearly everyone who has played a conspicuous part in our times, will be found fully described.

More than ten years have elapsed since *The World* came into existence, more than eight since its unparalleled success was assured. The causes of that success are easily explained. It was in the summer of 1874 that the first specimen of *The World* was presented to the public. If the prophets had been true it would have been very nearly a solitary issue. It was an entirely novel experiment, and for this reason it was pronounced to be, in some quarters, a desperate one. Others, again, recognised in it a return to the vilest usages of literary antiquity, and pronounced that the spirit of the *Age* and the

Satirist had once more assumed typographical shape. All, or most, of the critics and the seers were agreed that the venture had not in it a month's vitality; that the public would resent the impertinence of its articles, its paragraphs, and its methods generally, as an insult; that it was an importation of the worst principles of American journalism into this country; and that it was, in a word, un-English. But four weeks passed away; we gradually came to reckon our age by months; none of the sinister vaticinations were fulfilled. As a matter of fact *The World* was less than half a year old when it was an assured success.

From that time to this its record has been one of continued, increasing, and confirmed prosperity—a record on which, however gratifying it may be to myself, my readers might fairly charge me with tedious egotism if I were particularly to dwell. *The World*, in fact, which was first pronounced a mischievous and perishable excrescence, is now an institution. Instead of a print that English society would never tolerate, would trample under foot, would cause to be burned by the common hangman, it is a journal as necessary to society in the capital and in the provinces, in town and country, at home and abroad, within and outside the four seas, as those vast broad-sheets which are the contemporary chroniclers of humanity and its doings from day to day. Much of the secret of its success is to be found in its loyalty to the full scope of its title. It has never been unmindful of the wants and interests of every section of the English community. True to its name, it has addressed itself *urbi et orbi*. "A Journal for Men and Women," there has been infused into its columns an element of human interest to which it had been previously supposed that women at least were indifferent. For the first time, ladies—who, in publications which claimed to consult feminine idiosyncrasies exclusively, were hitherto obliged to be content with recipes for cookery, hints for illness, precepts for the nurture and training of infants, patterns for needlework, and mild facetiæ culled from the columns of would-be comic prints—now found a

journal which, proclaiming that it would not ignore them, interpreted their real wants, and supplied them too.

It is this adaptation of its contents to the necessities of the time, and to the various conditions of society; it is the actuality which has refused mechanically to accept purely conventional estimates of public feeling, that has enabled *The World* to secure, and then to retain, the favour of an immense body of readers. The letters which reach me from every part of the world convey the pleasant consciousness that *The World* succeeds in giving a social and political record, whose truth is as instinctively recognised at the Antipodes as within the sound of Big Ben. There is no quarter of the globe which the paper fails to penetrate, and the reason is that each successive number as it appears provides a faithful epitome, a genuine concentration and amalgam of what those of our countrymen and countrywomen, the officers and civilians, their wives and daughters, living under a foreign sun, want to know; of what they would actually hear and see if they were at home.

To provide this is a difficult and frequently, from the subject-matter with which it is necessary to deal, a delicate task. It must be well, wholesomely, and carefully done, or it had better not be done at all. That the public appreciate the manner in which it is performed is shown by the exceptional support given to our efforts in the direction pointed out.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

IN HOLLOWAY JAIL.

It is a somewhat singular coincidence that the strangest of all my experiences should have happened to me after my record of the notable circumstances of my life had been written and published. This being the case, I take advantage of the issue of this popular edition of my Reminiscences to give an accurate account of the episode, prefaced by an impartial narrative of the events which led up to it. I will endeavour to treat of the events as though, instead of being the principal actor in them, I had merely been one of those bystanders who, proverbially, "see most of the game": and this will be easier for me to do from the fact that, having been absolutely passive in the matter, having had all the evil results which overwhelmed me not merely brought about by no deed, but actually evoked by no impulse of my own, I remain at the moment of present writing in a kind of dream, with a vivid remembrance, indeed, of all that I have undergone, but with an absolute impossibility to explain to myself how, the absence of motive or volition being known to me, and allowed by my persecutors, I was made such a scapegoat, and condemned to such suffering.

Thus it came to pass. In the month of January, 1883, a paragraph appeared in the gossip columns of the *World*, hinting at the elopement of a peer. The publication of such a statement or suggestion, even had it been true, is wholly and absolutely indefensible: there is no excuse to be made for it

on any possible ground. I had felt this as I hurriedly read through the paragraph in proof, and had determined on its excision, when, as is my custom, I go through the proof for the second time. But, in the hurry of business, I unfortunately omitted to take this step—the fact that the whole statement was vague, and that no names were given, no personages pointed at, probably helped my failure of intention—and, as I have said, the paragraph appeared. When I saw it in the paper the next morning I was greatly annoyed at its stupidity and "bad form," its ridiculous vagueness and miserably "provincial" aspect; but I had not the faintest *arrière pensée* of the combustible material with which it was filled, or of the explosion it produced.

It very soon appeared that, vague as was the statement and anonymous as were the persons implicated in it, to me and the general public, to the upper classes it was as plain as the day; and Sir Henry James, the Attorney-General, obtained from the judges of the Queen's Bench a rule for a criminal information against me as the proprietor of the offending journal. In vain I, while admitting my responsibility, urged my entire innocence of intention or motive; proved that I knew little or nothing of the persons supposed to be implicated, proved that the paragraph was received from a contributor connected with the family of the implicated young lady and at variance with them; proving, therefore, at the same time, that I had been used as the innocent instrument of the contributor's vengeance—all in vain.

The prosecution would accept no apology and listen to no remonstrance. Sir Henry James, their leading counsel, urged their cause with a bitter and dogged pertinacity which could not fail to please them; and though the lawyers employed by me exercised all the astuteness at their command, and prevented the case from reaching anything like a concluslon for more than twelvemonths, the prosecution was eventually triumphant, and Friday, the 28th March, 1884, was appointed as the day on which I was to receive sentence for the misdemeanour which I had not committed.

On the morning of that day, accompanied by two or three intimate friends, I attended the Court of Queen's Bench. The case had been fixed for 10.30, but it was nearly 11 before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge and Mr. Justice Watkin Williams made their appearance on the bench. With the latter judge I was personally and pleasantly acquainted; and though in my then position I refrained from looking at him, he insisted on catching my eye, and giving me most friendly greeting. After a little talk among the officials, the business of the Court, so far as I was concerned, suddenly collapsed. Lord Coleridge rose, and, addressing the counsel engaged in most apologetic tones, informed them that there was necessity for a quorum of three judges on the bench; but his "Brother Cave," who was to have been the third, had unfortunately forgotten the appointment, and gone elsewhere; and that his "Brother Williams," who was there, had not read up the case. The Lord Chief Justice was mellifluously polite—he was very sorry for the Attorney-General; very sorry for Mr. Charles Russell, my counsel; very sorry for Mr. Yates. In regard to the last-named he might well be sorry; for after a year under the harrow, I had come up prepared to hear my doom, and had to have the torture prolonged because a paid servant of the public had blundered in his duty. The case was postponed till the following Wednesday. On that day, the 2nd April, I again attended the Court, where this time Lord Coleridge and his "brothers" were all ready for the sacrifice. Sir Henry James opened the proceedings with studied calm; he said but a very few words, and desired to leave the sentence wholly in the hands of the judges. I have not, and never had, the smallest doubt that Sir Henry James, from his long legal experience, had a tolerably close idea of what was to come. He had throughout his conduct of this case acted with unusual acerbity, for reasons with which I was well acquainted, and, having assailed me on previous occasions with as much invective as he considered judicious, he could well afford to be reticent in this the hour of his triumph. When the Attorney-General sat down, Mr.

Charles Russell said what he thought proper on my behalf, and then the judges retired.

That was for me a very trying time. Never could there have been more different opinions as to the sentence about to be passed. Nearly all had the idea that I should be fined; the suggested amounts varied from 50*l.* to 1,000*l.*; a very few thought that in addition to the fine I might be made to undergo a day's or even a week's imprisonment. I myself scarcely knew what to think. I am of a sanguine temperament, and anticipated a fine, and not a large one; but since I had been in court that morning I had thought differently; Lord Coleridge had been specially civil in assuring me from time to time that "there was no occasion to keep me standing." I remember Sir Alexander Cockburn's telling me that when he heard Lord Campbell say, courteously, "Let Mr. Palmer have a chair," he knew Palmer was as good as a dead man; and I awaited the return of the judges with anxiety.

They returned, and one rapid glance at Watkin Williams's face, thin, pale, sad, and strained, bade me prepare for the worst. It came the next minute. Glaring at me through his spectacles, Lord Coleridge proceeded to deliver a wholly unexpected tirade, winding up with a wholly unexpected sentence of imprisonment, as a first-class misdemeanant, for four months. Notice of appeal was at once given by my counsel, and I was released on bail. Since this, to me, memorable occasion, Lord Coleridge has himself been the defendant in a libel suit, brought against him by the gentleman who afterwards married Miss Coleridge; this suit was compromised by the defendant's making an apology and paying a sum of money.

The hearing of the appeal was postponed for another nine months, and did not, indeed, take place until Tuesday, the 13th January, 1885, when it was commenced before Sir B. Brett, now Lord Esher, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Lindley and Lord Justice Cotton. If their decision was against me, I had determined, on the advice of my counsel, to make a further appeal, this time to the House of Lords, which would have the effect

of delaying the absolute termination of the case, at which either all previous victories of my opponents must be annulled or I must go to prison for an indefinite period. But, while the dry and dusty legal chaff was being chopped, and the dull and pointless legal conundrums were being asked, now suasively and sonorously by Brett, M.R., now jerkily and raspingly by Cotton, L.J., now thickly and huskily by Lindley, L.J., it occurred to Master Mellor, a high official of the Court, whose courtesy and kindness I desire to recognise, privately to inquire what we intended doing if we were worsted. We replied, to appeal to the Lords. But, asked Master Mellor, what was to become of Mr. Yates in the interim? Under an alteration made by the new Judicature Act, there was no provision for accepting bail from an appellant in my position, and, consequently, if the case went against me, I must go to prison until my appeal came before the House of Lords, and remain there if the appeal was then not allowed. It was strange that none of my legal advisers knew of this; not Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., the great leader, not Mr. Poland, who for the last forty years has studied nothing but criminal law, and whose

> "All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,"

are bound up with the statutes, not Mr. George Lewis, the shrewd and painstaking! However, on further inquiry, Master Mellor's view was corroborated, and I determined at once to make no further fight, if I failed in this instance, but to accept my sentence and go to prison. This decision I announced to my legal advisers, at a consultation in Mr. Russell's chambers, after the close of the first day's proceedings, and it was agreed upon.

The hearing of the case was continued the next day, the 14th, but not concluded, and at my request Mr. Russell asked the judges to defer the publication of their decision till a later day. When I first attended the Appeal Court I thought I had months before me ere I was finally disposed of; now it

was plain that in a few hours I must surrender my liberty, and I had many arrangements to make. The judges, who were very courteous throughout, agreed to my application, and we proposed that the decision should be announced on the following Saturday; Sir Henry James, however, stating that day would be inconvenient for him—I saw afterwards that he was entertaining the Prince of Wales at a shooting-party on that date—Friday was fixed on.

I went home that evening and made the announcement so long dreaded, and yet, coming as it did, so unexpected. I had, fortunately for myself, many important arrangements to make, and much necessary business, consequent on my coming departure, to transact, thus partially distracting my mind from a sense of the misery with which it was filled. For ten years previously I had had no prolonged absence from my home, and the thought of separation—much more separation under such circumstances—was painful in the extreme. The day following, Thursday the 15th, I called by appointment on Mr. Alderman Herbert Waterlow, who was one of my sureties, the other being my old friend and Post Office colleague, Mr. Pearson Hill, and whose constant kindness and attention to me throughout the whole of this trying time I can never sufficiently recognise. Mr. Waterlow had arranged to take me to Holloway Jail, of which he was one of the Visiting Committee of justices, introduce me to the Governor, and let me see the establishment, of which neither he nor I doubted for a moment I should the next day become an inmate.

We arrived at the griffin-guarded gates forming the entrance to the high castellated tower of the prison, which then, and many a time since, recalled the huge pasteboard pantomime castles of my youth, from which the giant Grimgriffin (Mr. W. Payne) might have been expected to emerge. Warder-attended, we passed through these gates, crossed a courtyard, and ascended a broad stone staircase, beautifully clean, on a landing at the top of which was standing a man in a hideous brownish-yellow uniform, stamped here and there with the

broad arrow. This was a prisoner, who, at a word from the officer who had him in charge, promptly turned and remained standing with his face to the wall. Then we were shown into the Governor's office, with its despatch-boxes, paper-baskets, almanacks and books of reference, differing from other public offices only in the fact of its containing among its furniture a huge glass case filled with muskets and cutlasses, and pleasantly we were greeted by the Governor himself.

Lieutenant-Colonel Everard Milman, now and for the last six years Governor of Holloway Jail, formerly served in the Royal Artillery (Madras), and went through the Indian Mutiny. No mistaking him in look or manner for anything but a *militaire;* although his voice is singularly soft and his demeanour quiet and wholly void of anything like swagger, he has an air of command when it suits his purpose, which he must find eminently useful. It is difficult for me to express my indebtedness and my gratitude to this gentleman. Without swerving one hair's breadth from the exact line of his duty, he contrived by the mere exercise of his innate courtesy and kindness, far more by his tone and manner than by any actual word or deed, to alleviate my trouble, and to make me feel that, however unfortunate, I was in no way disgraced. With a man of different breeding and different mental calibre in his position, I know not what I might not have suffered: it was Colonel Milman's prompting to treat me as his guest rather than his prisoner, to place me at once as it were on my parole as regards the observance of the regulations, and to receive my wife with such delicate courtesy as it is impossible for me to describe and equally impossible for either of us to forget.

On this, our first introduction, the Colonel received me with politeness; showed me the room which he proposed to set apart for me, and informed me as to the regulations governing the treatment of first-class misdemeanants. Under them, I should be allowed to wear my own clothes, to furnish my "cell," to provide my own food; by the strict letter of the law I was not permitted to receive a visitor until after three months,

nor to write or receive a letter until the expiration of a similar period. But all this rested with the Visiting Committee of justices, of which the Lord Mayor, my good friend Mr. Nottage, was chairman *ex officio*, and with him and Herbert Waterlow in authority, I felt that all strainable points would be strained in my favour. So I returned home, after a call at Maple's to give a provisional order for such furniture as I should require, and made the best of the information I had to convey.

The next morning, Friday, January 16, I took a painful leave of my home, with the full certainty of not returning to it for some time, and a little before two o'clock I entered the Court of Appeal. It was so crammed that it was with difficulty I made my way to the seat I had previously occupied, facing the bar and with my back to the Bench. The notabilities of the Bar were present in great force. Noticeable throughout the proceedings had been the saturnine grimness of the Attorney-General; the hilarious chatter of Sir Farrer Herschell, not by nature, one would think, a merry little man, but possibly moved to mirth by the succulent comicality of the proceedings; the pleasant and highly open countenance of Mr. Danckwaerts, that erudite Boer, who "devilled" for Sir Henry James. Specially noticeable was the performance of Mr. Charles Russell on his green silk pocket-handkerchief; the

> "blast from that dread horn,
> On Fontarabian echoes borne,"

always came in just as Sir Henry James was about to make a point, swallowing up every other sound, made little Lord Justice Cotton jump like a jack-in-the-box, and dispelled the light slumber of the genial Mr. Samuel Danks Waddy, Q.C.

From time to time, and especially on the day when judgment was given, well-known literary men, notably of *The World* persuasion, elbowed their way through the dense mass of briefless barristers and idlers which crammed the court. Mr. Escott was there, with the future editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, now at Eton; bland and burly Mr. Becker occupied a

seat by his chief; Mr. L. J. Jennings, Croker editor and *Quarterly* Reviewer; Mr. J. R. Robinson of the *Daily News*; Mr. Bancroft; Mr. Parkinson, J.P. and D.L., intimate friend of twenty years, stedfastly loyal; Mr. Pearson Hill, *ancien confrère* of the plaintiff in error; Mr. Alderman Waterlow, one of his sureties; Mr. Frank Finlay, Mr. C. W. Mathews, Mr. Harold Power, Mr. Edward Draper—were all there, hoping against hope.

Silence was proclaimed, and the judges commenced to declare their decision, which, as everyone in the Court knew beforehand, was delivered against my appeal. That appeal was made on the strength of a passage in the Newspaper Libel Act, which set forth that no newspaper proprietor should be prosecuted without the consent or fiat of the Public Prosecutor being first obtained for such prosecution. In this case the fiat had been refused, the Public Prosecutor thinking it unnecessary. It was, of course, a technical objection, but if words have any meaning, or, rather, have the same meaning in legal language as they have in lay language, I still think we were right. It took two days to argue, and the judges took over two hours to give their decision, and were ineffably technical and dull.

The Master of the Rolls was tedious, but he has a fine presence and a mellifluous voice, and he was the first of the three, consequently the most tolerable. When he had finished he covered his face, not with his mantle, but with his beringed hand: he could not evidently stand the speeches of his "brethren." Cotton, L.J., in a voice that had not been oiled since its owner's youth—some time since—began to put the drollest hypotheses and conundrums. "Well, now, let us suppose." "Why, or rather, what is the difference between," etc. Lindley, L.J., delivered some delightfully apposite remarks upon a wholly different case from that under dispute, and they all three at various times referred to the Act of *Philip* and Mary!

Mr. Charles Russell was not present at the conclusion, and it had been arranged between Mr. George Lewis and myself that I

should tell the judges I had given up the idea of appealing to the Lords, and was ready to surrender. Accordingly, when Lindley, L.J., had finished, I rose and faced the Bench. There was an immense excitement in the Court, for no one knew what I was going to do. Some, I believe, expected an outburst of temper, and the Master of the Rolls screwed up his features with a most comical expression of astonishment. There was, however, a general feeling of relief when I said: "My lords, I hope you will allow me, in the absence of my able counsel, to say that I do not propose to carry this case to the House of Lords, and that I am prepared now to surrender myself to the Court. Your lordships have so clearly and concisely proved to me that, in legal language, if not in lay language, an enactment that 'no criminal prosecution shall be commenced' without a certain preliminary, means that any prosecution may be commenced without it, that I shall not attempt to pursue the matter further."

Then I sat down, and for a moment there was a hitch. No one seemed to know exactly what should be the next step. The Master of the Rolls, a man of kindly nature and delicacy of feeling, seemed to shirk the unpleasant duty of then and there remitting me to prison; he appealed to the Attorney-General, who, in a low voice, remarked that all that remained to be done was to give effect to the sentence passed in the other Court. I, on the principle guiding the well-bred dog, offered myself to the judges' tipstaff, an individual in pale Dundreary whiskers, whose duty it is to take into his custody and convey to prison the persons of sentenced misdemeanants, and who had been hovering round me for some time. But here Master Mellor very kindly struck in; he asked me to wait in his room while my order of committal was being made out; he relieved me temporarily of the attentions of the tipstaff, and accompanied me and Mr. Lewis to his room, where we chatted until the formality was completed. Then the officer and I got into a hansom, and we proceeded on our journey to northern latitudes.

In his desire to avoid wounding my feelings, the tipstaff had merely given "Holloway" as the direction to the cabman, and as the prison is really in the Camden Road, we made much unnecessary *détour*, and were some time before reaching our destination. Indeed, my companion was so full of anecdotes, chiefly relating to the parties whom he had convoyed, and of whom I gathered the "contempt of courters was the most obstreperous," and I was so much occupied with my own thoughts, that it was not until, suddenly looking up, I saw looming ahead of us what was unmistakably Highgate Archway, once a familiar object, but not previously beheld by me for nearly forty years, that I ventured to suggest we were going out of our way. At length, however, we arrived under the shadow of the castellated towers, after due exchanges of words were admitted, the doors closed behind me, and I was a prisoner.

Passing through a second *grille*, and leaving the griffin-guarded door to the right, I came upon Maple's van standing at the entrance of the corridor from which opened the room allotted to me, and which I had inspected the previous day. Furniture cumbered both corridor and room, being put in order by the upholsterers' men, under the direction of my old servant, who had brought my clothes and many comforts. At one of the windows a prisoner, in the hideous jail garb, was standing nailing up a blind, which the thoughtful kindness of the Governor had ordered, a warder in close attendance on him. Colonel Milman being out, the head-warder politely introduced himself to me, in order to relieve the tipstaff of my custody, verified my name, read out my sentence, and deprecatingly informed me that I was to remain in my new quarters for four months. The tipstaff retired, and I saw him no more.

I went back to my room, which was still in a chaotic state, for the furniture brought was all on too large a scale, and had to be changed the next day, and helped as best I could in getting things straight. But the re-action consequent on the

strain of the past few days, which was in itself the essence of the strain of the past two years, was beginning to tell upon me: my head ached and my heart was very sore indeed. The gloom of the half-lit corridor, with its vista of iron galleries, spiral staircases and cell-doors, the constant rattling of keys and clanging of locks, the recollection of the home-parting, the knowledge that I was suffering innocently, that I was paying in person for what I had not had or done, or even desired to have or do, all worked upon my already over-excited nerves, and for the first and only time I bitterly repented having allowed matters to come to this pass, instead of forfeiting my bail and placing myself beyond the power of my persecutors. I was pacing the corridor in an agony of misery when I was joined by my old servant, who implored me to make the best of it, for the sake of those at home, but who, when I told him I thought it would kill me, was, though he said nothing, very much of that opinion.

A warder now approached me, and, saluting, asked whether I had ordered my supper, as it was past seven o'clock, and all lights must be out and everything closed by half-past eight. I had no appetite and no idea of the time, no realization, indeed, of what had happened to me; but I asked the man to procure me a steak and some tea from a neighbouring tavern, and when the latter was served in a tin pannikin I remembered Magwitch and had no doubt as to what had befallen me. I made an attempt at eating, but it was a failure; then the upholsterers' men went away, my old servant, who had slaved in trying to get me a little comfort, followed them, and I turned into bed, and, thoroughly worn out, mercifully slept throughout the night.

The next day I woke at 6 a.m., composed, refreshed, and "myself again." An excellent bath, on the opposite side of the corridor, with hot and cold water, was appropriated to my sole use, and after a good breakfast I received a visit from Colonel Milman, who explained the regulations under which, by the permission of the visiting justices, I must live. My

wife and sons were to have free access to me, and I made out a small list of such friends as I wished, or it was necessary for me, to see. This list was given by the Governor to the door-keeper, and those whose names were not on it, and who came desiring admission, were referred to Alderman Waterlow, in the capacity of visiting justice, for permission. I had full liberty to write and receive all letters, and, by Colonel Milman's thoughtful kindness, my wife's communications had specially prompt delivery. I had what books and newspapers I wanted; my table was supplied partly from a neighbouring restaurant, but principally in all matters of country produce, and soups, condiments, preserves, etc., by constant hampers from home, and by the unfailing regular contributions of friends. The doctor—and I desire to record my grateful thanks to Dr. Gordon, then, but no longer, medical officer of the prison, for his unremitting professional attention and private kindness—authorized, in my case, the moderate use of wine and tobacco; and the Governor permitted me to take exercise, whenever I chose, in the grounds of the infirmary, where I could be neither met nor overlooked, and where my sons and my friends often shared my regular walks.

My room, on the ground-floor of the east wing of the prison, where there are no criminals, but merely debtors or persons in confinement in default of finding sureties ordered by the courts, was 16 feet by 14, of good pitch, and had a fire-place always well supplied, and two windows looking out on to a bit of garden bounded by the infirmary wall. I furnished it with some Persian rugs, a bed, writing-table, chest of drawers, a huge screen, very necessary in excluding the draught, a large arm-chair in saddle-bag stuff, a large washing-stand, a pier-glass, and a clock. I had also a waste-paper basket, most kindly sent me by Mr. Hill, of the Viennese shop in East Street, Brighton; the basket is held up by a splendid stuffed fox, of whom I made a great companion. On the wall was a very handy cupboard, and a hanging book-case was supplied from the prison-stores. I had the use of a huge empty cell for

a larder and store-closet, and, as I have said before, of a bath, etc., in the corridor. For the rent of my room I paid, I think, three-and-sixpence a week, and a similar sum for the services of one of the "surety" prisoners, who cleaned my boots, washed my floor, and did generally the rough work. I was waited on by two of the warders alternately, one of whom had been a trooper in the Life Guards, the other an old prison official. By these men I was treated with the greatest civility and kindness: no private servants could have been more zealous or more respectful. Indeed, from everyone connected with the prison-staff, from the highest to the lowest, I received the utmost courtesy and consideration. I may here state that my room, while I inhabited it, very much surprised my visitors by its bright and cheerful aspect, bearing little resemblance to the conventional prison-cell: the walls were painted, I had photographs and nicknacks on the shelves, and though it was winter, I had always a wealth of flowers. On the very day after my arrival, my dear old friend Charles Kent sent me a lovely camellia tree, "La Picciola" as he prettily called it, and from that day until I was released I was most abundantly supplied by my friends, a fine lilac-tree from Lord Londesborough's gardens at Kingston being planted, after it had ceased flowering, opposite my window, as a memento of my visit.

There was not much variety in my life. Wakened at 6 a.m. by the clanging of the bell, I fell asleep again, and was called soon after seven by the warder, who lit the fire and left me, telling me that the bath was ready. Across the corridor in dressing-gown and slippers to a bath which was warm and comfortable, clean and wholesome, but which had very much the appearance of a grave, and where the process of ablution was carried on in a somewhat airy fashion, only a half-door shutting me off from the corridor, and where the pungent smell of the blacking with which the surety-prisoner was polishing my boots in the next compartment was, to say the least of it, noticeable. Back to my room to find breakfast ready, and *the* home letter and the *Times*, specially selected on their arrival by the

Governor's kindness, awaiting me. After breakfast I dressed in leisurely fashion, and then went out for an hour's sharp walking exercise. Round and round the infirmary grounds and in the shadow of the high walls, straining my eyes at some distant windows where, by odd chance, I never saw a soul; listening to frequent sounds of outside life, the lowing of cattle being driven by to the neighbouring market, the whistle on the tram-road, the rattle of the tram horses' harness, and to what for a long time I imagined to be the shrieks of a neighbouring parrot, but which eventually proved to be the whoopings of an imbecile inmate of the infirmary, with something in his throat. There was one point in my walk from which the lofty tower and the castellated battlements of the prison stood out against the sky in almost picturesque grandeur, and there I would call a halt, repeating to myself the *Marmion* lines, "Day rose on Norham's castled steep," and endeavouring by a little play of fancy to shut out the grim reality. Save an occasional warder passing to his work, and now and then escorting a little batch of prisoners on their way to and from the infirmary, I never saw a soul. I was evidently the cause of much astonishment to the prisoners, who could not imagine who I was; clearly not one of them, as I wore private clothes and carried a stick; not a warder, or I should have been in uniform; they must have taken me for a friend of the doctor's, fond, at once, of exercise and seclusion.

At the end of an hour my attendant warder would come for me. I never moved anywhere unattended, and never passed through a doorway without having the door unlocked for my passage and locked after I had passed; and I returned to my room, to find other letters and newspapers. Every other day, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, my wife travelled from Brighton to London, and what was almost as trying and certainly a more fatiguing journey, from Victoria to Holloway, to be with me, arriving before noon and remaining till half-past three. At one o'clock we lunched together. On other days I arranged for one of my sons, or a friend, or Simpson, my faithful secre-

tary, to come to me in the afternoon, and they would frequently join me in my ante-prandial walk, which occupied from one to two hours. At five they left: it was growing dark, and I came in to dinner. Over this meal I would dawdle and delay as much as possible, for at six I was shut in for the night, and after that I saw no one, scarcely heard a sound until the next morning. By the prison rules all lights were put out at half-past eight, but I had the Governor's permission to keep my gas and reading-lamp till ten, and the doctor's orders to have a night-light; but after six, save when on occasion the Governor would chat to me for a few minutes on his way home to dinner, or two friends, whose official position gave them access to the prison at any hour, chose that which they knew would be my dull time to pay me a visit, I was wholly alone. As soon as the warder had cleared my dinner away, made up the fire, and placed my bottle of mineral water on the table, he would ask if I required anything further, and, answered in the negative, would wish me "good-night" and retire, locking the door, which was not to be unlocked for thirteen hours.

My evening's proceedings never varied. That was my time for correspondence, and I wrote all my letters to be ready for the warder in the morning. I did a little literary work, and made notes and memoranda for others to work upon. Soon after eight I began to read, and at nine I lit the one cigar in which I indulged daily. I might, possibly, have exceeded this allowance without remonstrance, but I was so kindly treated that I was not willing to presume upon this indulgence, and I was always anxious that no unfortunate neighbour, deprived of such luxury, should get a whiff of my tobacco and be saddened at his restriction. So I kept to my one cigar, and smoked that when my nearest neighbours, the debtors above—there was no other inmate of my corridor—had been shut in for some time, and were probably asleep.

About half-past nine I laid aside my book and threw open the window to air the room. There were two bars across it, but they were not very close together, and I could look out on

to the infirmary, where a bright light was burning; on to the dark outlines of the Governor's house, with a candle glimmering in an upper window, the children's room, as I fancied it; at the now crescent moon, or my old familiar friends the stars, the Great Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, familiar for so many years, in so many lands, but never seen before, never, good Lord! expected to be seen, through prison bars! The noises of the street had died away; the tram cars had ceased running, and the dead solemn silence, a silence that could be felt, was only broken occasionally by the piercing shrieks and long drawn-out lamentations of the engines of the heavily-laden goods trains on the Great Northern Railway, which continued throughout the night. Then I would go through a regular mechanical routine of closing the window, drawing the blind, lighting the nightlight, shifting the position of the clock, undressing, and extinguishing the gas, being well in bed before I heard the click of the outside covering of the *trou Judas* in the door, by which I knew that the night-watchman had looked through to see that the regulation had been obeyed.

The Sundays were the longest and the dullest days, for then no visitors were admitted. I generally attended morning service, the Governor having kindly allotted me a seat with the chief warder, in a pew next his own, which was shut in with curtains, so that, without being seen, I could look over the body of the chapel where the prisoners were arranged. The aspect of these men was nothing like so bad or so repulsive as that of the denizens of other similar establishments which, in an amateur capacity, I had previously visited: Holloway being wholly kept for men sentenced to short terms, they are not compelled to be close-shaved, and the growth of facial hair is a very important factor to the improvement of personal appearance. Their behaviour was particularly good and attentive, but it struck me that they threw peculiar energy into their delivery of the hymns, more especially when those hymns were of a self-denunciatory character. Dickens used to say a man once sat next to him in church, who gave forth a verse from the

Psalms, "I am a pelican in the wilderness and an owl in the desert," as though he really believed he were at the time the incarnation of those specimens of creation. My theory of the stentorian singing of the prisoners is that they are taking opportunity, otherwise denied them, of exercising their lungs. *Apropos* of the hymns, on the first Sunday of my attending the chapel I had a rather ludicrous experience. I had scarcely been in my new position for forty-eight hours, and was naturally in the lowest spirits; the three hundred broad-arrowed gentry upon whom I looked down from my pew were little likely to be overflowing with happiness; so that it did seem greatly out of place when the worthy chaplain, in rather a festive voice, gave out, "Now, my dear brethren, we will sing the hymn, number —, page —, 'O day of gladness, joyful day!'"

For nearly two months out of the four to which I had been sentenced, I led the life I have thus attempted to describe. At the end of that time my health, which had been seriously disturbed owing to the complete upset of the nervous system, fell into such a critical state, that on the certificate of the prison doctor, endorsed by the opinion of the Medical Inspector attached to the Home Office, the remainder of my sentence was remitted, and I was released on the 10th March, after a term of imprisonment of over seven weeks. This grace was by no means easily obtained; but my friends were eager and zealous in my cause. Some of the foremost members of the medical profession urged the necessity for immediate action; and after the second report of his own special medical inspector, Sir W. Harcourt gave way, and I was restored to my home. I left England almost immediately; and, after six weeks' travel on the Riviera and in Northern Italy, returned, much tranquillised and invigorated.

I will not close this somewhat gloomy chapter without illumining it with a very vivid ray of light. On Saturday, the 30th May, a dinner, to welcome my return to freedom, and to congratulate me on my renewed health, was given to me at

the Criterion Restaurant. Lord Brabourne presided, and two hundred gentlemen attended, among whom were friends of my school-days, of my early official life, of my earliest and latest newspaper days. The Chairman in his speech expressed his belief that "the intention of the banquet was to express to their friend Edmund Yates the feeling that when misfortune had overtaken a man, and the misfortune which had fallen on him was without a shade or shadow of moral turpitude on his part, they were glad to take the opportunity of assuring such a man that when misfortune was over, he would receive as much friendship and sympathy as before from those who felt that nothing which he had done had tended in aught to lessen their sympathy or diminish their friendship."

It is fitting, I think, for my sake, and for the sake of those who come after me, that these words should find permanent record.

THE END.

BILLING AND SONS, PRINTERS, GUILDFORD.
S. & H.

RICHARD BENTLEY & SON'S

Autumn List of New Works

OCTOBER 1885.

FRANCIS I.—HENRY II.

THE COURT OF FRANCE in the SIXTEENTH CENTURY, 1514-1559.

By CATHERINE CHARLOTTE, LADY JACKSON, Author of "Old Paris," etc.

In 2 Vols., large crown 8vo., with Portraits. 24s.

ILLUSTRATED BY STURGESS.

THE COACHING AGE.

By STANLEY HARRIS, Author of "Old Coaching Days," etc.

In 1 Vol., demy 8vo., with 16 Full-page Illustrations on Stone by JOHN STURGESS.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

OLD "MISCELLANY" DAYS.

Stories by Various Authors. Reprinted from "Bentley's Miscellany."

In 1 Vol., 4to., with 33 Full-page Illustrations on Steel (only once worked, nearly fifty years ago) by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

The Barber of Beaulieu.
Marcel's Last Minuet.
Don't be Too Sure.
The Self-playing Organ.
Hunting John Dory.
Minor Bodkin's Cure.
Orlando Griffin.
Regular Habits.
The Handsome Clear-starcher.
The Secret.
Wat and the Witch's Cat.
The Autobiography of a Joke.
The Band of the Forty-Seven.
The Duellists.
Sir Archibald.
The Romance of a Day.
The Two Interviews.
The Disappointed Man.
The Elderly Gentleman.
The Good-for-Nothing.
Midnight Mishaps.
The Marine's Courtship.
Jack in Disguise.
The Devil Skipper.
Jack among the Mummies.
An Incident in Paris.
The Battle of the Nile.
Sling the Monkey.
The Black Robbers.
The Harmonious Owls.
Giles Chawbacon.
Dick Dafter.
Paddy Carroll the Piper.

PARISIAN SOCIETY UNDER LOUIS PHILIPPE.

MADAME MOHL AND HER FRIENDS.

By GRACE RAMSAY.

In 1 Vol., demy 8vo., with a Portrait by STODART.

LANDSCAPES BY THE AUTHOR.

A DRIVE THROUGH ENGLAND;

OR, A THOUSAND MILES OF ROAD TRAVEL.

By JAMES JOHN HISSEY, Author of "An Old-Fashioned Journey."

In 1 Vol., demy 8vo., with 20 Full-page Illustrations engraved by GEORGE PEARSON.

"THE SHILLING INGOLDSBY."

THE INGOLDSBY LEGENDS;

OR, MIRTH AND MARVEL.

By the Rev. RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM.

An entirely New Edition, in 1 Vol., demy 8vo., with 50 Illustrations. 1s.

A RESIDENCE IN THE MALAY NATIVE STATES.

THE CHERSONESE with the GILDING OFF.

By EMILY INNES.

In 2 Vols., crown 8vo., with Frontispiece. 21s.

RECENT EXPLORATION IN THE HOLY LAND.

ACROSS THE JORDAN:

Being Explorations in the Hauran and the Janlan.

By G. SCHUMACHER, C.E. With an Introduction by LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

In large crown 8vo., with nearly 150 Illustrations. 6s.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SALAD FOR THE SOCIAL," ETC.

PASTIME PAPERS.

A Series of Essays upon Miscellaneous Subjects.

By FREDERICK SAUNDERS.

In 1 Vol., small crown 8vo.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PASTIME PAPERS."

SALAD FOR THE SOLITARY AND SOCIAL.

A Series of Essays upon Miscellaneous Subjects.

By FREDERICK SAUNDERS.

A New Edition of this once popular work, in 1 Vol., 4to.

A NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION OF

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY of EDMUND YATES.

To which is added an account of his recent Experiences in "Northern Latitudes."

In 1 Vol., crown 8vo., with Portrait. 6s.

A NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION OF

HETH AND MOAB.

By Captain CLAUD REGNIER CONDER, R.E.

In 1 Vol., crown 8vo., with Illustrations. 6s.

SAINT PAULA AND SAINT OLYMPIAS.

WIVES & MOTHERS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

By LADY HERBERT, Author of "Three Phases of Christian Love."

A New Edition in 1 Vol., crown 8vo. 6s.

EDITED BY THE EARL OF LYTTON.

THE HUNGARIAN STORIES of KARL EDLER.

1. Baldine. 2. Notre Dames des Flots. 3. A Journey to the Gross Glockner Mountains.

Translated by OTTILIE MÜHLMANN.

In 1 Vol., crown 8vo.

NEW ADDITIONS TO BENTLEYS' FAVOURITE NOVELS.

I.

A PERILOUS SECRET.

By CHARLES READE.

1 Vol., crown 8vo. 6s.

II.

NOT LIKE OTHER GIRLS.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY.

1 Vol., crown 8vo. 6s.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

Bentley's Favourite Novels.

EACH WORK CAN BE HAD SEPARATELY, PRICE 6S., OF ALL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN OR COUNTRY.

By Mrs. HENRY WOOD.

East Lynne.
Anne Hereford.
Bessy Rane.
The Channings.
Court Netherleigh.
Dene Hollow.
Edina.
Elster's Folly.
George Canterbury's Will.
Johnny Ludlow. (1st Series.)
Johnny Ludlow. (2nd Series.)
Johnny Ludlow. (3rd Series.) (In the Press.)
Lady Adelaide.
Life's Secret, A.
Lord Oakburn's Daughters.
Master of Greylands.
Mildred Arkell.
Mrs. Halliburton's Troubles.
Orville College.
Oswald Cray.
Parkwater.
Pomeroy Abbey.
Red Court Farm.
Roland Yorke.
Shadow of Ashlydyat.
St. Martin's Eve.
Trevlyn Hold.
Verner's Pride.
Within the Maze.

By RHODA BROUGHTON.

Cometh up as a Flower.
Good-bye, Sweetheart!
Joan. | *Nancy.*
Not Wisely but too Well.
Red as a Rose is She.
Second Thoughts.
Belinda.

By Mrs. ALEXANDER.

The Admiral's Ward.
Look before you Leap.
Her Dearest Foe.
The Wooing o't.
Which shall it be?
The Freres.
The Executor.

By Mrs. Annie EDWARDES.

Leah: a Woman of Fashion.
Ought We to Visit Her?
Steven Lawrence: Yeoman.
A Ball Room Repentance.

By Mrs. RIDDELL.

Mystery in Palace Gardens.
Susan Drummond.
Berna Boyle.

By Mrs. PARR.

Adam and Eve.
Dorothy Fox.

By HAWLEY SMART.

Breezie Langton.

BENTLEYS' FAVOURITE NOVELS—Continued.

By MARCUS CLARKE.
For the Term of his Natural Life.

By FLORENCE MONTGOMERY.
Misunderstood.
Thrown Together.
Seaforth.

By JESSIE FOTHERGILL.
The First Violin.
Probation. | *Healey.*
The Wellfields.
Kith and Kin.

By ROSA N. CAREY.
Wooed and Married.
Nellie's Memories.
Barbara Heathcote's Trial.
Robert Ord's Atonement.
Not like other Girls.
(In the Press.)

By Miss F. M. PEARD.
Near Neighbours.

By Hon. LEWIS WINGFIELD.
Lady Grizel.

By Baroness TAUTPHŒUS.
The Initials. | *Quits!*

By Mrs. CAMPBELL PRAED.
Policy and Passion.

By HELEN MATHERS.
Comin' thro' the Rye.
Sam's Sweetheart.

By ANTHONY TROLLOPE.
The Three Clerks.

By J. SHERIDAN LE FANU.
In a Glass Darkly.

By JANE AUSTEN.
(The only Complete Edition, besides the Steventon Edition, at 63s.)
Emma.
Lady Susan, and, The Watsons.
Mansfield Park.
Northanger Abbey, and, Persuasion.
Pride and Prejudice.
Sense and Sensibility.

By Mrs. NOTLEY.
Olive Varcoe.

By Lady G. FULLERTON.
Too Strange not to be True.
Ellen Middleton.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL.
An Ocean Free Lance.

BENTLEYS' FOREIGN FAVOURITE NOVELS.

By HECTOR MALOT.
No Relations.

By Mrs. AUGUSTUS CRAVEN.
A Sister's Story.

By E. WERNER.
No Surrender.
Success: and how he won it.
Under a Charm.

RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, NEW BURLINGTON STREET, LONDON,
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

SIX SHILLING VOLUMES.

Each Volume to be had separately, with the exceptions shown, in crown 8vo., cloth, price 6s.

A NEW BOOK OF SPORTS AND GAMES. 6s.
THE SPORTING LIFE OF THE REV. "JACK" RUSSELL.† 6s.
MITFORD'S RECOLLECTIONS OF A LITERARY LIFE.† 6s.
BRINSLEY RICHARDS' SEVEN YEARS AT ETON. 6s.
LOW'S LIFE OF LORD WOLSELEY.† 6s.
BISHOP THIRLWALL'S LETTERS TO A FRIEND.† 6s.
W. H. MALLOCK'S SOCIAL EQUALITY. 6s.
W. H. MALLOCK'S ATHEISM AND THE VALUE OF LIFE. 6s.
ARNOLD'S TURNING POINTS IN LIFE. 6s.
THE INGOLDSBY LEGENDS.† 6s.
ASHLEY'S LIFE OF LORD PALMERSTON.† 2 vols. 12s.
STEPHEN'S LIFE OF DEAN HOOK.† 6s.
THE LIFE OF THE REV. R. H. BARHAM (Thomas Ingoldsby).† 6s.
SIR E. CREASY'S FIFTEEN DECISIVE BATTLES. 6s.
SIR E. CREASY'S HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION. 6s.
SIR E. CREASY'S HISTORY OF THE OTTOMAN TURKS. 6s.
GUIZOT'S LIFE OF OLIVER CROMWELL.† 6s.
MIGNET'S LIFE OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.† 6s.
BARHAM'S LIFE OF THEODORE HOOK. 6s.
BAKER'S OUR OLD ACTORS.† 6s.
PHIPSON'S BIOGRAPHIES OF CELEBRATED VIOLINISTS. 6s.
HAVARD'S THE DEAD CITIES OF THE ZUYDER ZEE.† 6s.
LORD DALLING AND BULWER'S HISTORICAL CHARACTERS. 6s.
TIMBS' LIVES OF PAINTERS.† 6s.
TIMBS' LIVES OF STATESMEN.† 6s.
TIMBS' WITS AND HUMORISTS.† 2 vols. 12s.
TIMBS' DOCTORS AND PATIENTS. 6s.
THE BENTLEY BALLADS. 6s.
COOPER'S CORAL LANDS OF THE PACIFIC.† 6s.
WOOD'S CRUISE OF THE RESERVE SQUADRON.† 6s.
WOOD'S IN THE BLACK FOREST.† 6s.

† These volumes contain Portraits, Illustrations, or Maps.

To be obtained at all Booksellers'.

RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, NEW BURLINGTON STREET, LONDON.

00023406

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018